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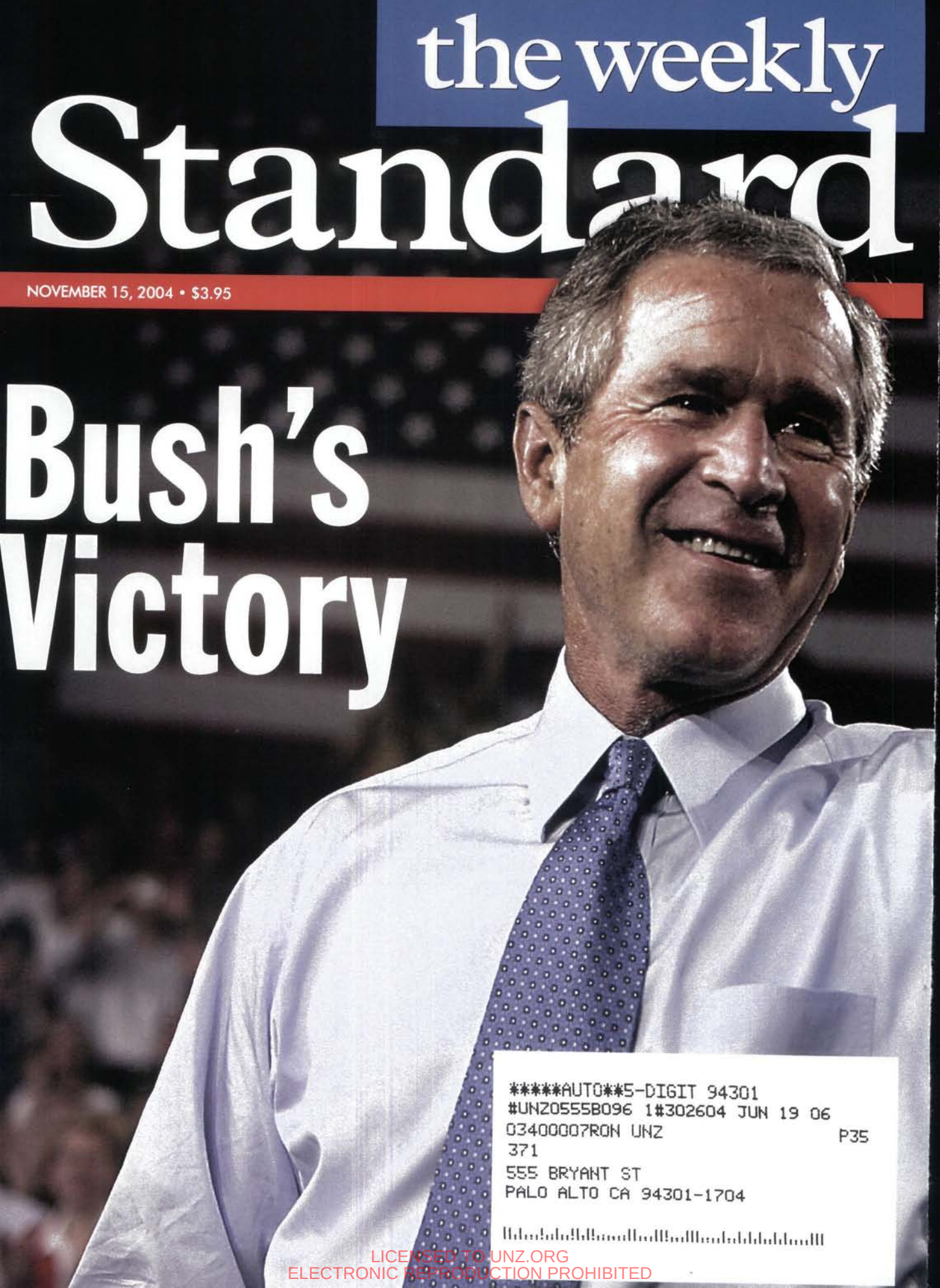
Bush's Victory



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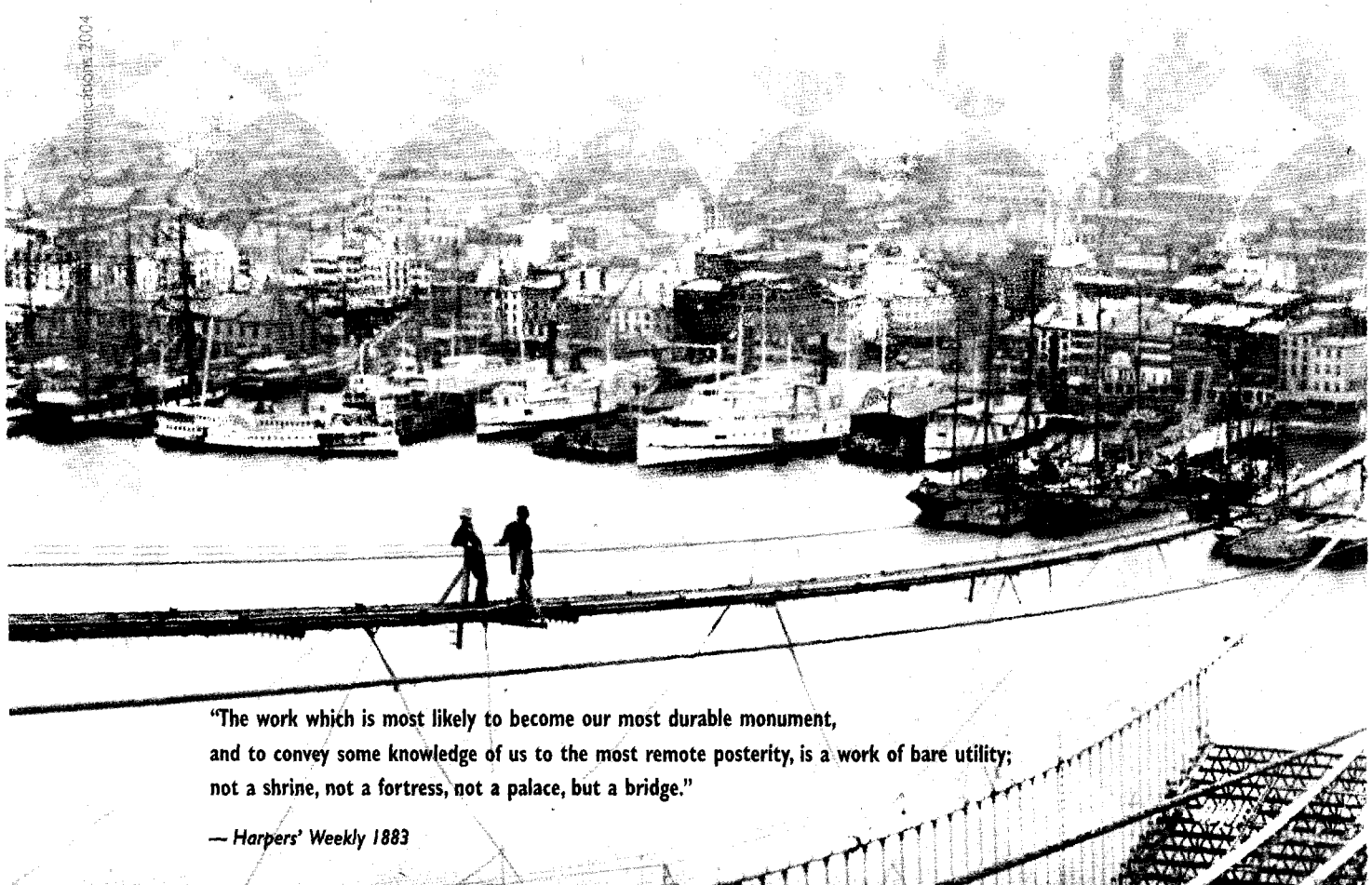

WE'RE BUILDING AMERICA'S BROADB

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MISUNDERESTIMATED AGAIN
by William Kristol

ACT TWO
by Fred Barnes

THE BUSH REALIGNMENT
by Jeffrey Bell

PURPLE AMERICA
by John J. DiIulio Jr.

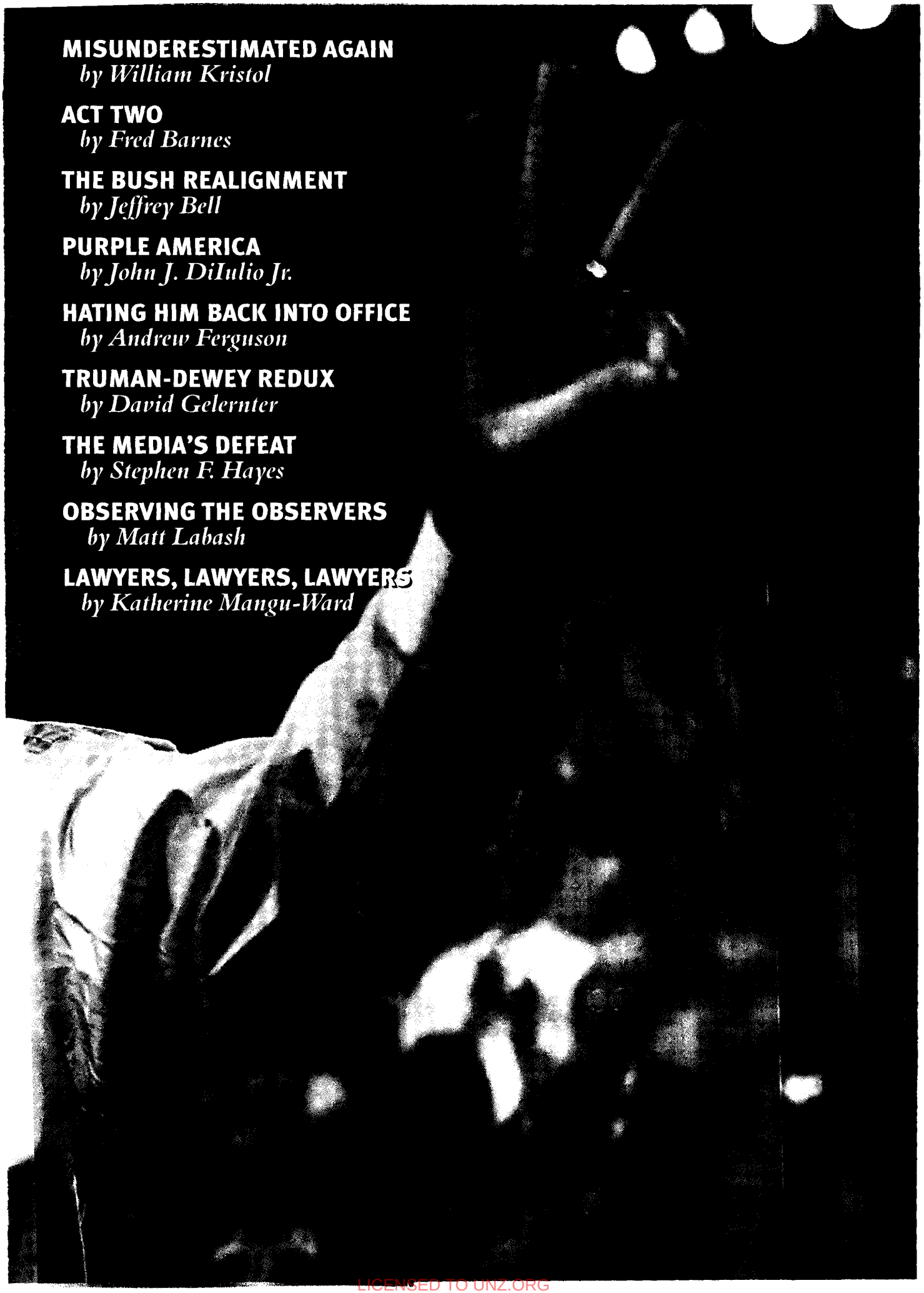
HATING HIM BACK INTO OFFICE
by Andrew Ferguson

TRUMAN-DEWEY REDUX
by David Gelernter

THE MEDIA'S DEFEAT
by Stephen F. Hayes

OBSERVING THE OBSERVERS
by Matt Labash

LAWYERS, LAWYERS, LAWYERS
by Katherine Mangu-Ward



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THE WEEKLY STANDARD (ISSN 1083-3013) is published weekly (except the first week in January, third week in April, second week in July, fourth week in August, and the second week in November) by News America Incorporated, 1211 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10036. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, P.O. Box 96127, Washington, DC 20077-7767. For subscription customer service in the United States, call 1-800-274-7293. For new subscription orders, please call 1-800-283-2014. Subscribers: Please send new subscription orders to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, P.O. Box 96153, Washington, DC 20090-6153; changes of address to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, P.O. Box 96127, Washington, DC 20077-7767. Please include your latest magazine mailing label. Allow 3 to 5 weeks for arrival of first copy and address changes. Yearly subscriptions, $78.00. Canadian/foreign orders require additional postage and must be paid in full prior to commencement of service. Canadian/foreign subscribers may call 1-902-563-4723 for subscription inquiries. Visa/MasterCard payment accepted. Cover price, $3.95. Back issues, $3.95 (includes postage and handling). Send letters to the editor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, 1150 17th Street, N.W., Suite 505, Washington, DC 20036-4617. For a copy of THE WEEKLY STANDARD Privacy Policy, visit www.weeklystandard.com or write to Customer Service, THE WEEKLY STANDARD, 1150 17th St., NW, Suite 505, Washington, D.C. 20036. THE WEEKLY STANDARD Advertising Sales Office in Washington, DC, is 1-202-293-4900. Advertising Production: Call Nicholas H.B. Swezey 1-202-496-3355. Midwest Advertising Sales: 1-312-953-7236. Copyright 2004, News America Incorporated. All rights reserved. No material in THE WEEKLY STANDARD may be reprinted without permission of the copyright owner. THE WEEKLY STANDARD is a trademark of News America Incorporated.

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Recline Yourself, Resign Yourself, You're Through

At an August 1 campaign stop in Taylor, Michigan, Sen. John Kerry made what in retrospect appears to have been the most self-destructive of his many sports-related electioneering errors: He dissed his hometeam Boston Red Sox.

"We've been waiting since 1918 for the Boston Red Sox to win the World Series," Kerry acknowledged. But "if I had a choice between the White House and the World Series this year, I'm going to take the White House. How's that?"

Answer: Not so good. Hell froze over, for one thing: The Red Sox did in fact go on to win the World Series, beating the hated New York Yankees—and the legendary "Curse of the Bambino"—in the process. At which point Kerry, having entered into a reverse *Damn Yankees* satanic compact, became pretty much guaranteed to lose his bid for the presidency.

Also, there was the Bob Shrum factor.

Mr. Shrum, of course, is the "super-strategist" whom Democratic presidential candidates make a special point to hire whenever they want to be absolutely sure they won't win. His record is perfect on this score: Before this year, Shrum had held important positions in seven major Democratic presidential campaigns dating back to Edmund Muskie's abortive primary effort in 1972. Sure, four years ago, things got a little hairy; Shrum hired up with Al Gore and—gasp!—almost won. A "stunned glow . . . washed over Shrum's tearful face" on election night in 2000, another Gore aide recalled to the *Washington Post* a couple of months ago. "Bob kept saying, 'Finally, finally'. . . . He didn't really know what to do with himself."

But 2004 wasn't nearly so anxious-making. Shrum worked for Kerry. Kerry lost. Simple as that.

The Red Sox have been exorcised. But the Curse of the Shrumbino lives! ♦

Saudi Cleric: Democracy Stinks

Even without Bob Shrum, on the other hand, Sen. Kerry would still have had to confront . . . well, the whole free-elections problem we have here in the United States.

Interviewed October 25 on Al-Majd, a Saudi satellite television network broadcast out of the United Arab Emirates, Saudi cleric Saleh Al-Munajid was notably downbeat about the upcoming American presidential election. After all, he asked his viewers, "What do you think of a voting system like the American one that gives a physician, an intellectual, an astronaut, an intelligent person and the head of the family, a vote that has the same weight as the vote of an ignorant, a fool, an idiot, an imbecile, a hippy, a bum, an unemployed man, who has no diploma, culture, or brains. What is this?!"

It's not the system they've got in Al-Munajid's country, that's for damned sure. In Saudi Arabia, nobody votes. And—apparently—the fools, idiots, and imbeciles get invited onto TV shows to brag about the fact. ♦

Howell Raines: Democracy Stinks

What does it mean that George W. Bush has won reelection? It means a couple of things, as former *New York Times* executive editor Howell Raines presciently explained—before the fact—in an Oct. 31 *St. Petersburg Times* column.

First of all, "If George Bush wins the presidential election, Americans can mark it down as a triumph of thug politics," Raines suggests. The "altruism and good government" of the New Politics 1960s "has been displaced by an intellectual crudeness that was inherent in the modern American conservatism that began slouching toward Washington after the Republican convention in San Francisco in 1964." This phenomenon is malign from below: Its base voters—"'God's People,' as they call themselves"—are in one of their "frenzied national revivals" and now seek to legislate "theologically based cultural norms."

And the conservative leadership is malign, as well, Raines adds, having been produced by a horrible genetic mutation in America's once-noble aristocracy. "Who could have guessed that such a proud, powerful know-nothing as George W. Bush would be a scion of the great Industrial Age fortunes and a graduate of our second oldest university?"

Finally, Raines concludes, there's the rot that now infects American journalism. It used to be that people instinctively esteemed the kind of man who was likely to be—for example—executive editor of the *New York Times*. But then "Fox and its enablers on the comedy news shows and among neo-conservative intellectuals" came along and "destroyed public trust in that traditional model."

So much does Mr. Raines respect the

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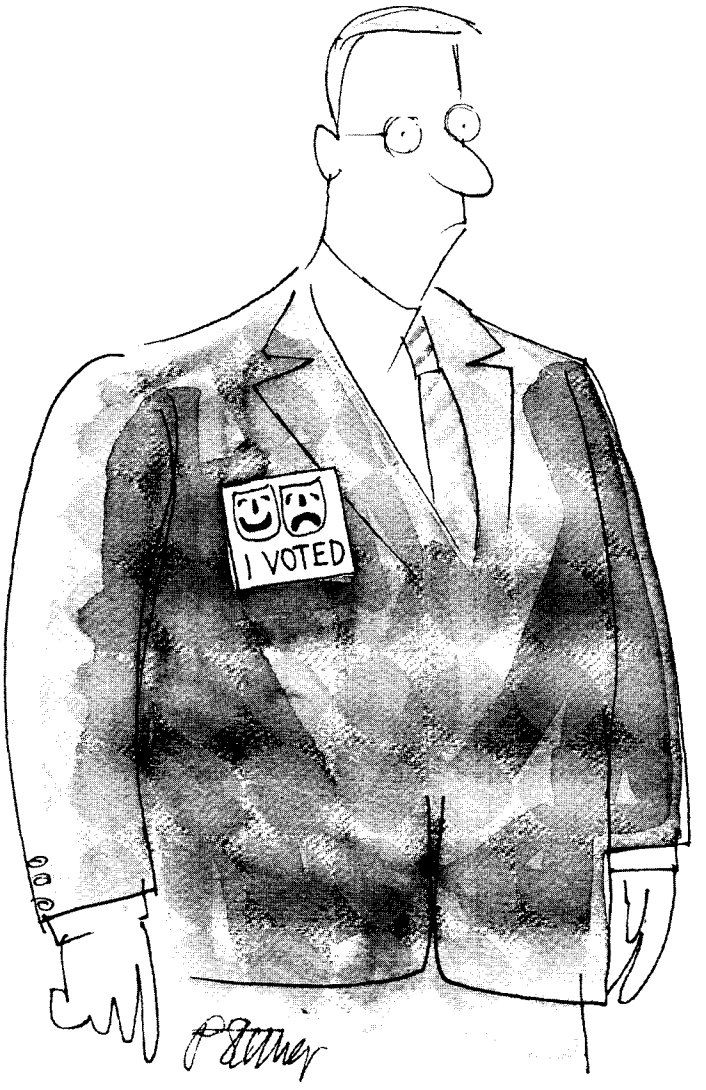

intelligence of his readers, incidentally, that he feels it unnecessary to remind them precisely *how* Fox and its neoconservative enablers accomplished this dastardly, devastating assault on the automatic prestige of the *New York Times*.

Conservatives being as stupid as they are, however, THE SCRAPBOOK figures it ought to spell this out plain as day: Mr. Raines's discussion of American journalism's current, sorry state omits all mention of the fabulist he promoted in the pages of his former paper, one Jayson Blair. ♦

Nee Nee Nee Nee, Nee Nee Nee Nee

That's the signpost up ahead, and John Kerry's next stop, metaphorically speaking, is The Rather Zone.

"Al Gore's situation is he's basically got his back to the wall, his shirt-tail on fire, and a bill collector's at the door."

—CBS News anchor Dan Rather, Election Night 2000

"Kerry can still win it but at this point he's got his back to the wall, his shirt-tail on fire, and a bill collector's at the door."

—CBS News anchor Dan Rather, Election Night 2004

Oui Oui Oui Oui, Oui Oui Oui Oui

Le Monde breaks the bad news to the French. Their man didn't win the White House. As a result, they still have to contend with *le cowboy*. George W. Bush's "foreign policy," they report, "owes less to the intellectual persuasiveness of neoconservatism than it does to the trauma of the September 11 attacks. To be sure, thanks to his religious convictions, his Manichean view of the world, and his simplistic idea of a global struggle between Good and Evil, Bush was certainly predisposed to embrace the muscular internationalism and crusading spirit of neoconservatism. But without Osama bin Laden, that disposition would undoubtedly have remained in a latent state.

"Unfortunately, the effects of September 11—a feeling of vulnerability, mixed with military swagger and a sense of duty—have yet to be erased. The favorable vote for the Republicans shows that a great number of Americans are still making decisions based on their perception of a terrorist threat. . . .

"It is highly unlikely that the reelected president will be more disposed to consult his traditional allies over decisions about the security of the United States. The Republican administration is particularly unlikely to reach out to Europe, which it still distrusts. Americans can't comprehend that for Europeans 11/9 (Nov. 9, 1989, when the Berlin Wall fell) is more important than 9/11. For Europeans, the date that matters is that of reconciliation; for Americans, it's the one when war was declared." ♦

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Casual

Satellite Saved the Radio Star

It was once believed that the rise of television would lead to the demise of radio. True, you no longer see families gathered around an oversized wood-paneled box, eagerly awaiting the next episode of *Amos 'n' Andy*. (And a good thing too.) But radio nevertheless survived, and even thrived, by staying attuned to the needs of consumers. Instead, when historians look back years from now, it will be apparent that the gravest threat to radio came not from television, but rather, from advertising.

Not too long ago, radio commercials were tolerable. Some were even memorable. One particular jingle frequently played on New Jersey stations went:

If you got a passion for fashion
If you got a craving for saving
Take the wheel of your automobile
And come on down to . . . Ideal.

That was more than 20 years ago, and to this day I have no idea what Ideal is or was. Still, it was a catchy tune. Which is more than I can say about the current crop of on-air ads. A few years back, the MotoPhoto chain ran a commercial involving a monotonous exchange between two men:

Did you say Yoko Ono?
No, MotoPhoto.
Quasimodo?
No, MotoPhoto.
Sonny Bono?
No, MotoPhoto.

And on and on it went, for what seemed an eternity, undoubtedly causing listeners to tune elsewhere. But even more annoying ads were popping up across the dial, usually around the same time. A friend of mine remembers an ad for a dance club in Fresno:

B-B-B-Bisla's! Bisla's!
P-P-P-Party all night!
Drink beer! Meet chicks!
Experience the alternative.

What listeners needed was an alternative to such grating commercials. But stations, hungry for the revenue, only packed in more ads. A popular station would then tout its "more than 40 minutes of music every hour," which inevitably meant listeners had to sit through a 5 or 10-minute block of commercials twice an hour.

Another problem was on-air personalities who started off as disc jockeys but gradually devoted less and less time to music and more and more time to talk. There was always the option of tuning out and listening to CDs, but they're predictable, and if you're driving a long distance, it's variety that keeps you going. So where do you go to find a station that offers your favorite music, but without commercials?

Enter satellite radio. I recently purchased a Delphi Roady receiver (the size of a Palm Pilot) from XM Radio, one of two satellite radio providers. XM currently serves more than 2 million customers and growing. The receiver itself costs a little over $100 and you pay a subscription of $9.99 each month. But what you get is sheer bliss: over 120 channels of music, talk, and sports—and no commercial breaks.

Suddenly getting stuck in traffic is a pleasure. Massive construction delays? No problem when Tony Bennett or Mel Torme is crooning. Caught behind a bus that stops every other block? Check out the latest from The Shins while you wait.

When I first installed my XM Radio, the abundance of music was overwhelming—I found myself jumping from classic soul to neo soul to progressive fusion. Eventually I settled on a few favorite channels, including "Bluesville" and a guilty pleasure called "Awesome 80s." (I admit I tend to skip the seven stations devoted to country and the two to Christian rock.)

Aside from the music, there's a vast array of talk—including Fox News, CNN, C-SPAN, a books and drama channel, and comedy (ranging from family-friendly to extreme raunch). Even better, an XM Radio receiver can now be attached to your home stereo or office computer. The latest model, the Delphi MyFi, is a portable handheld device. Like the other units, you can take it with you across the country.

Critics once doubted anyone would spend money on radio. But if people pay for television cable, why not? Market demand is being driven by those who are fed up with obnoxious commercials and too much talk; people who seek an appealing selection of music and not mind-numbing repetition.

What we are witnessing is nothing less than the Rebirth of Radio. Another Golden Age is dawning—without commercial interruption. With any luck, those unbearable radio ads will become a thing of the past. And when future generations ask us what they were like, we'll be able to respond, through a haze of nostalgia: *Drink beer! Meet chicks!*

Victorino Matus

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Who We Are

Regarding William Kristol's "The 9/11 Election" (Nov. 1/Nov. 8), surely *New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman understands that Americans are often defined by our response to events (if not by the individual events themselves).

Just as Tom Brokaw's "Greatest Generation" was defined by its resolve in combating a previous axis of evil, so today's generation will be defined by its approach to terrorism. Either we will respond by committing ourselves to wage war against terrorists and their state sponsors, or else we will display timidity, weakness, and cowardice in the face of those who are already waging war against the United States.

Var White
Birmingham, AL

Lone Star Hate

As one of the few Republicans in the People's Republic of Austin, I'd like to say kudos to Andrew Ferguson for his dead-on accurate "The Birthplace of Bush Paranoia" (Oct. 25). Austin is indeed a hotbed of Bush bashing, going back to the 1994 gubernatorial race between George W. Bush and Ann Richards. Actual facts do nothing to dissuade the characteristic Austin Bush-basher.

For example, ask a typical Austin Democrat to name a significant bill that John Kerry introduced during his 20 years in the Senate, and you'll get a blank stare. Ask an Austin Democrat what specific piece of Bush-backed legislation they oppose, and you'll also get a blank stare.

But ask one to explain why he or she has an abject hatred for George W. Bush, and you'll get a frothy, scripted response: Bush is dumb, Bush is Hitler, Bush wants to destroy the environment, etc.

While I love Austin itself—including the great music scene and the beautiful Texas hill country that surrounds the city—the majority of its citizenry sure has some distasteful political inclinations.

Those inclinations lie somewhere between the bizarre paranoia displayed by former Vermont governor Howard Dean and the cradle-to-grave nanny statism advocated by Ohio congressman Dennis Kucinich.

I just hope Weekly Standard readers keep in mind that Austin is an anomaly in Texas. Most Texans are in fact normal, rational folks with good common sense and the ability to see through the spin and propaganda that emerges from Austin.

David J. Fox
Austin, TX

Andrew Ferguson has written an outstanding article on just what it means to be a Bush-hater in Austin, Texas. His observation that Texas liberals evince a peculiar brew of condescension

and contempt is right on the mark.

(In my view, Texas "progressives" also appear somewhat desperate, kind of like those self-absorbed high school girls who are bitter because they weren't invited to the prom.)

I am a native Texan, but just recently became a resident of Austin. I was initially surprised by the attitudes I found here. Not any more. Ferguson is correct that Austin seems to be populated by Texans who, well, really don't like Texas. Their condescension is often palpable.

No matter. I am thoroughly enjoying their pain!

Len Denton
Austin, TX

The Kid is All Right

As a high school-age Republican, I can identify wholeheartedly with the isolation Dan Gelernter relates in "An Army of One" (Oct. 25). I also share his frustration at having to deal with the inaccuracies and outright distortions many of my liberal classmates employ in debate.

Their extremism is truly astounding. Even more astounding is their ability to make various off-the-wall arguments ("Bush's actions in Iraq are just as bad as Hitler's aggression," for example) with a straight face.

Yet whenever I become frustrated by such virulently anti-Bush remarks, I simply remember the words a very wise man once spoke: "It's not that our liberal friends are ignorant, it's just that they know so much that isn't so."

Geoff Smock
Steilacoom, WA

Errata

In William Tucker's "La Grippe of the Trial Lawyers" (Oct. 25), vaccine-maker Chiron should have been identified as a U.S. company. Although its vaccine plant is in England, Chiron is actually headquartered in Emeryville, California.

"Tir'd nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep," cited in the Oct. 25 Casual, comes not from Shakespeare but from 18th-century English poet Edward Young's "The Complaint and the Consolation, or Night Thoughts on Life, Death, and Immortality."

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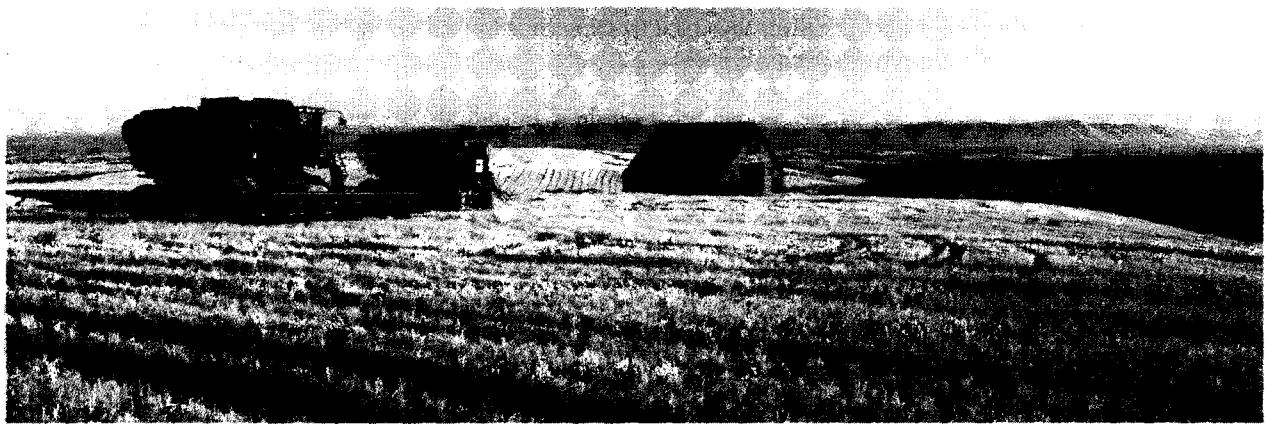

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the weekly Standard

Misunderestimated

It has happened again. Here at home, a great many people who fashion themselves his moral and intellectual superiors turn out once more—as he might put it—to have misunderestimated George W. Bush. And it has happened abroad, as well, where the president's opponents and enemies—which is to say America's opponents and enemies—must now be pulling their hair and gnashing their teeth with frustration and resentment. The exit polls said Kerry would win. The *New Yorker* had endorsed him. And *still* those idiot Americans reelected Bush!

How sweet it is to contemplate the misery of people who think like this. And how doubly sweet the joy felt by the president's supporters after those same (misleading) exit polls had plunged them—us—into 12 long hours of anxious gloom. "Nothing in life is so exhilarating as to be shot at without result," Churchill quipped. This week millions of Republicans know just what he was talking about.

But they should know something else, as well. Exit polls aside, the election was not, in fact, a "squeaker."

On November 2, 2004, George W. Bush won more American votes than any other presidential candidate in history—8 million more than he won in 2000, as a matter of fact. He was the first presidential candidate since 1988 to win more than 50 percent of the popular vote. He was the first incumbent since 1964 to win reelection while simultaneously expanding his party's representation in both houses of Congress. He had coattails, in other words; Republicans were elected to no fewer than six Senate seats that had previously been occupied by Democrats, for example, and in all six of those states, Bush ran well ahead of the rest of his party's ticket.

The hair-pullers and teeth-gnashers won't like it, of course, but we're nevertheless inclined to call this a Mandate. Indeed, in one sense, we think it an even larger and clearer mandate than those won in the landslide reelection campaigns of Nixon in 1972, Reagan in 1984, and Clinton in 1996. Needless to say, the Nixon, Reagan, and Clinton victory margins were much, much bigger. But that's in no small part because each of those preceding presidents could plausibly claim to be stage-directing a Morning in America, or building a Bridge to the Twenty-First Century.

George W. Bush could run no such smiley-face campaign. He is a war president. So he has run a war president's remarkably serious and substantive campaign. That campaign was not without its flaws; Bush had his bad moments, especially in the first debate. But he won the overall campaign debate. And because he won that overall debate—not because the visuals were nifty; not because it was the economy, stupid—he won the right to lead the United States for another four momentous years. George W. Bush's 2004 election is an accomplishment of ideological confirmation not unlike—obvious box-score distinctions notwithstanding—the one Franklin Roosevelt achieved in 1936.

Except that Roosevelt's, if anything, was easier. Bush chose the steepest possible climb. A year ago, when the president announced the July 1 transfer of power in Iraq, it was the consensus of cynics everywhere that Karl Rove had informed his boss that politics required him to slither away from Baghdad. Everyone who was anyone, here and in Europe, "knew" that this transfer of sovereignty would be an exit strategy in disguise. Everyone "knew" that Rove would never place his client president before the electorate while 150,000 American troops were still taking daily casualties—and considerable criticism—in the Middle East. Whatever mistakes the administration has made these past 18 months—and there've been more than a few too many—President Bush deserves enormous credit simply for staying the course, for rejecting bad advice to cut and run from purported friends and foes alike. On this central question of national security and principle, George W. Bush has proved himself an extraordinarily courageous president.

And the American people deserve enormous credit for backing up and ratifying his resolve. Let those who would dispute the point pull their hair till they're bald.

Now, the day after Election Day, is not the time to begin debating what sort of ambitious second-term agenda the president should adopt. It is enough to say that its ambitiousness will prove the key to its success. In his elegant Boston concession speech on Wednesday, John Kerry made a public plea for bipartisanship in the Washington, D.C., of a second Bush administration. And the president would be well advised to take Kerry up on the offer; bipartisanship is a fine thing, and nuance is a useful and admirable political grace.

But true statesmanship, and the landmark achievements that attend it, demand something more. *L'audace, toujours l'audace*, said Danton.

Who says George W. Bush doesn't understand the French?

—*William Kristol*

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Hate's Labour's Lost

How Michael Moore led the Democrats astray.

BY ANDREW FERGUSON

"Always give your best, never get discouraged, never be petty; always remember, others may hate you, but those who hate you don't win unless you hate them, and then you destroy yourself."

—Michael Moore

WAIT. I'm wrong. Michael Moore didn't say that. (Where's that fact-checker?) No, it was Richard Nixon who said that, 30 years and 3 months ago, on the day he left the White House a few steps ahead of the sheriff. Nixon knew all about hatred—as does Moore. Except Nixon realized, a bit too late, the price that haters pay in the end.

Bush-haters hate it when you call them Bush-haters. You should see my email. "Who are you to call anyone a hater, you filthy piece of [hate-filled expletive] ?????" wrote one baffled correspondent not long ago. Others, trying to dissuade me from using the term, take a more anecdotal approach. "Perhaps you will let me share a story," wrote another correspondent. "In the check-out line I met a young man wearing his Bush-Cheney button and I tried to engage him in dialogue. I told him I could not believe the venom that's been spewing forth from Republicans. He said, 'You don't like Bush?' I told him, no I did not, I did not have my head far enough up my ass to be a Republican. I suppose by your definition, then, you would consider me a Bush-hater?"

Well, yeah, I guess I would. Some things are just unavoidable. To hear Bush-haters tell it, though, the Bush-hater is a figment of the right-wing imagination, like the Cadillac-driving welfare queen who, as Ronald Reagan taught us, bought vodka with her food stamps. (*Right-wing*, by the way, is the Bush-hater's essential epithet, more crucial even than *asshole*; whole paragraphs, entire lines of argument would collapse were the Bush-hater deprived of *right-wing*. Not everybody who uses the epithet is a Bush-hater, of course, but everybody who's a Bush-hater uses the epithet.)

The problem for people who claim there's no such thing as a Bush-hater is the evidence, of which there is a great deal, most of it pretty straightforward. I don't think you need to be a clinical psychologist to conclude that someone who pays $13.95 for *The Bush-Hater's Handbook* or $14.95 for a Dubya Piñata ("a great way to rid yourself of some of that 'frustration' when you see him on TV!") has crossed the line from "Bush disliker" to something rather more intense. For further confirmation, read the *I Hate George W. Bush Reader* or order a CD recording of the popular ditty, "I Hate Republicans." Read an issue of *Vanity Fair* or *Rolling Stone* or *Esquire*. Go to a screening of Moore's *Fahrenheit 9/11* or, next spring, watch the Academy Awards ceremony on TV, when *Fahrenheit 9/11* will win the Oscar for Best Picture.

It is remarkable, in hindsight, how thoroughly Moore's movie infiltrated the election, and how receptive the popular Democratic mind was to its sly intimations, its gaping elisions and crude misdirections. Moore became standard-bearer of the anti-Bush army and its chief propagandist. When his movie was treated to a gala premiere at a Washington theater—klieg lights raking the sky, local scam-artists striding the red carpet—Moore was greeted curbside by the chairman of the Democratic National Committee, Terry McAuliffe, who tried, unsuccessfully, to throw his arms around the tubby tycoon's body mass. Among the happy crowd, according to Sen. Bob Graham, himself a lunatic Bush-hater, were "half the Democratic Senate." The movie received a standing ovation.

Moore himself is merely a popularizer. His movie's incoherent, scattershot caricature of Bush—as, simultaneously, a feckless party boy and insidious Caesar bent on world domination—derived from exposés written by professional polemicists like Molly Ivins and Paul Krugman. Many of those books proved popular, too, but for people whose sensibility inclines towards images and sounds rather than words on paper, Moore made the caricature stick. His obsession with Bush's National Guard service soon became general among Democrats, suckering in Dan Rather and the crew at *60 Minutes*, to Rather's everlasting regret. Democratic moneymen made expensive media buys repeating Moore's insinuations about Bush's favored treatment of the bin Laden family after 9/11. The movie's famous sequence of a dithering president reading *My Pet Goat* in a Florida schoolroom on the morning of 9/11 was transformed into a standard Democratic talking point. Eventually it became a laugh line in speeches by John Kerry and John Edwards, and then, in a final grotesque metastasis, into a jape echoed by Osama bin Laden himself.

Haters deal in agitprop, being impatient with the more deliberate forms of persuasion. The practical problem with agitprop, when it enters the political conversation, is

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that it isn't argument. Often it doesn't even rise to the level of assertion. Moore bragged that fact-checkers from the *New Yorker* magazine had vetted his script, proving, he said, that it was without factual error. He had a point, in a way. The movie contained relatively few straightforward factual assertions. There was very little for the fact-checkers to check, and very little to argue with. Moore's method was not to present evidence but to assemble insinuations, piling one on top of another. The method may be suitable for propaganda and entertainment; it is disastrous in a nationwide political campaign aimed at unseating a well-known incumbent. It means you will gain the serious attention of only those who already agree with you. Everyone else—which is to say, a large chunk of the electorate—is left out; puzzled at first, and then turned off altogether.

Meanwhile, Bush himself remained vulnerable (Moore wasn't the only fat target on offer this year). There was a serious critique of his presidency to be made, and occasionally more sophisticated Democrats—such as the suave editorial writers at the *New Yorker*, or even, sometimes, Kerry himself—would make it. But it was the Moore caricature that got the true believers' hearts started every morning and that came to define the Democratic attacks on Bush. And the caricature, unlike the substantive critique, was absurd, and was understood as absurd by anyone not already consumed with hatred for the object of the caricature.

Hate is nothing new in American politics, needless to say. It's probably unavoidable as a leaven in the loaf. But its dangers have seldom been so evident as they were this year. Democrats might want to reacquaint themselves with Nixon's farewell. Michael Moore is too clever and cynical a showman to destroy himself, as Nixon did. Democrats who succumbed to Moore's showmanship may not be so fortunate. ♦

The Bush Realignment

Morals matter most.

BY JEFFREY BELL & FRANK CANNON

IT WAS EITHER history's closest landslide or profoundest squeaker. Arriving right on schedule, in the 36th year after the post-New Deal realignment of 1968, and culminating in Ohio, home base of the McKinley realignment dear to the heart of Bush strategist Karl Rove, the 3-percentage point reelection of George W. Bush dwarfs in potential importance the 49-state "lonely landslides" achieved by Richard Nixon in 1972 and Ronald Reagan in 1984.

In part, of course, that is because the 2004 election profoundly alters the Senate, the chief obstructer of the Bush agenda. Because of Bush's red-state coattails, Republicans won all five Democratic open seats and increased their predominance among southern senators from 13-9 to 18-4. Perhaps equally important, the defeat of Senate minority leader Tom Daschle was a shot across the bow of Senate liberals, who have been able to thwart Bush's conservative judicial nominees and so much of the rest of his domestic agenda. By contrast, the landslide reelections of Nixon and Reagan both coincided with Democratic gains in the Senate.

But it is also because the roller-coaster politics of the post-9/11 era have, at least so far, been mastered by a radical conservative president willing to take great risks in return for great rewards. Few leaders would have been willing to stay firm on the transformation of Iraq in the midst of the withering setbacks of the past year. Bush dared his Democratic opponent, and in effect the American people, to specify a better way. John Kerry failed to meet that dare, and the electorate ultimately stuck with Bush's high-risk forward strategy on the war against Islamist terror at its moment of greatest vulnerability.

This is not to say that Kerry and his advisers made a political blunder in their approach to terrorism and Iraq. The direct antiwar assault contemplated by Howard Dean would have fared far worse, had he or someone like him been the nominee. Kerry's nonspecific, minimalist alternative policy on Iraq, coupled with his broad attack on Bush's competence, nearly worked because Kerry and his team correctly recognized that 9/11 had changed America and its view of the world. Invading Iraq (or, one could speculate, Afghanistan) is not something a President Kerry would have done, but it was not a mindset candidate Kerry could have directly attacked without bringing his own suitability for the presidency into question. Kerry was correct in believing that however little 9/11 had changed him, it had marked a sea change in the worldview of the American people.

What Kerry failed to see, and ultimately what sealed the fate of his candidacy, was a similarly momentous change in people's view of social issues brought into play earlier this year by the high court of his own home state. As we argued in these pages a month before the election ("The Rise of the Values Voter," Oct. 11), survey research commissioned by *Time* and MSNBC/Knight-Ridder revealed that concern over social issues such as abor-

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tion and same-sex marriage had taken a quantum leap this year and had become far more favorable to Republicans than in previous election cycles, particularly in the swing states in which the election was ultimately decided.

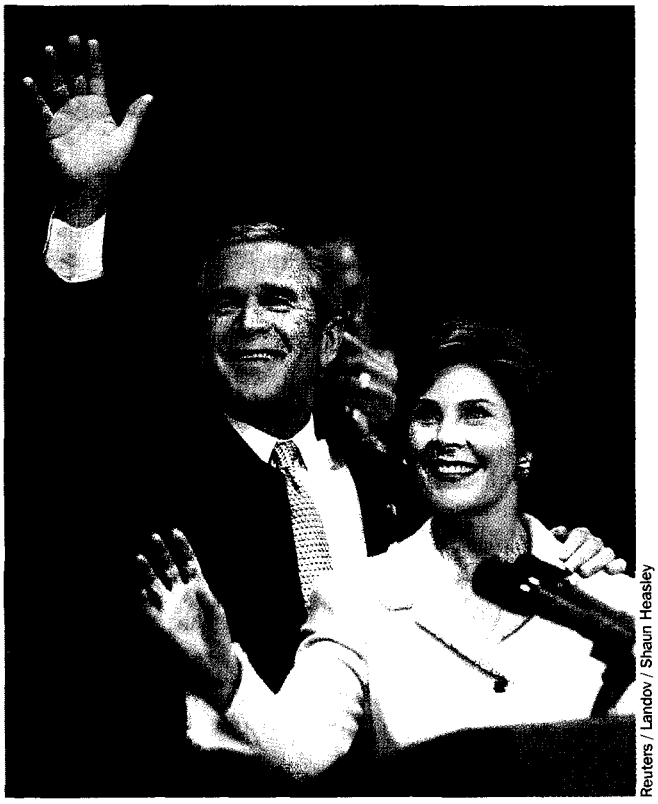
On a tactical basis, Kerry showed some awareness of the danger to himself and his party. He consistently opposed same-sex marriage, even saying he agreed with voters in Missouri who voted by 71 percent in the August primary to write a ban on same-sex marriage into their state constitution. Coincidentally or not, Bush moved into a strong lead in Missouri shortly after that vote, and the Kerry team subsequently pulled the plug on media spending in the state.

But in his final debate with President Bush on October 13, Kerry made what most observers regard as his only serious misstep of the three debates—a mistake that arguably deflected the momentum Kerry had achieved by his otherwise adroit performance in the debates. The circumstances are worth recalling.

Moderator Bob Schieffer began by asking Bush a question that could have been lifted from the Kerry playbook: "Mr. President . . . , let's shift to some other questions here. Both of you are opposed to gay marriage. But to understand how you came to that conclusion, I want to ask you a more basic question. Do you believe homosexuality is a choice?"

Bush replied that he didn't know, but that respect was due to people and their life choices. It would have been easy for Bush to stop there, but instead he implicitly rejected the premise of Schieffer's question and went on to explain how much more active his opposition to same-sex marriage is than Kerry's:

> But as we respect someone's rights, and as we profess tolerance, we shouldn't change—or have to change—our basic views on the sanctity of marriage. I believe in the sanctity of marriage. I think it's very important that we protect marriage as an institution, between a man and a woman.
>
> I proposed a constitutional amendment. The reason I did so was because I was worried that activist judges are actually defining the definition of marriage, and the surest way to protect marriage between a man and woman is to amend the Constitution.
>
> It has also the benefit of allowing citizens to participate in the process. After all, when you amend the Constitution, state legislatures must participate in the ratification of the Constitution.
>
> I'm deeply concerned that judges are making those decisions and not the citizenry of the United States. You know, Congress passed a law called DOMA, the Defense of Marriage Act.
>
> My opponent was against it. It basically protected states from the action of one state to another. It also defined marriage as between a man and woman.
>
> But I'm concerned that that will get overturned. And if it gets overturned, then we'll end up with marriage being defined by courts, and I don't think that's in our nation's interests.



Reuters / Landov / Shaun Heasley

It was in response to this foray that an annoyed-looking Kerry began his own answer to Schieffer: "We're all God's children, Bob. And I think if you were to talk to Dick Cheney's daughter, who is a lesbian, she would tell you that she's being who she was, she's being who she was born as."

In context, it's hard to see this cold, seemingly gratuitous use of Mary Cheney as anything other than an implicit threat of retaliation to Bush's decision to open ideological space between himself and Kerry on their approach to dealing with same-sex marriage.

If Bush had made more such forays, particularly in swing-state advertising, the voter-perceived threat posed by judicial activism to traditional marriage might have been more widely understood. But it is at least arguable that the 11 successful same-sex constitutional referenda on the November 2 ballot, including one of the strictest in Ohio, kept the issue in voters' minds without too much further help from the Bush-Cheney campaign.

If there was one final development destined to bring judicial activism on the social issues back into voters' minds it was the announcement, just eight days before the election, that Chief Justice William Rehnquist has been stricken with thyroid cancer and had undergone an emergency tracheotomy and began chemotherapy. The day before the election, Rehnquist announced that he had not been physically able to return to the court on Monday, as he had earlier planned.

On Election Day, the National Election Pool exit poll asked voters

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what was the issue that influenced them the most. The unexpected winner: "Moral Values," running ahead of Economy/Jobs, Terrorism, and Iraq. Among these voters—22 percent of the national total—Bush bested Kerry 80 to 18 percent. Nationally, 18 percent of all voters were in the Bush "Moral Values" category, 4 percent in the Kerry "Moral Values" category. In an election he won by 3-plus points, in other words, Bush won "Moral Values" voters by 14 points, while losing all other voters combined by between 10 and 11 points.

How is it possible that in a time of war and global crisis, voters see "Moral Values" as comparably important—an issue that was central in delivering reelection to a consequential, controversial wartime president?

The answer is that voters can weigh more than one big worry at the same time. In 1980, Americans felt beleaguered by the fear of losing the Cold War and by stagflation at home. A more "sensible" politician than Ronald Reagan would have suggested addressing one crisis first, then turning our emphasis to the other.

Counterintuitively, Reagan sensed that he needed to address both crises at once. He cut taxes deeply, supported Paul Volcker's ratcheting up of interest rates, and instituted a massive military buildup, all in his first year as president. By 1982, Reagan's job performance rating had fallen into the 30s, and he was widely regarded as a failure. In 2004, the year of his death, what Reagan did goes by a different name.

Today, many voters' sense of security is equally threatened by military attacks by our terrorist enemies and by elitist judges' assaults on our ability to guard our moral standards by means of self-government here at home. As he thanked his supporters and the American people in the Ronald Reagan Building Wednesday afternoon, President Bush took a giant step toward a comparable achievement. ♦

Act Two

Keys to a successful second term.

BY FRED BARNES

WHY DO PRESIDENTS stumble in their second terms? Four reasons. They try to govern without a real agenda, having exhausted their policy initiatives in the first term. Their wisest and most competent aides and advisers leave and are replaced by less talented people. They suffer from bad relations with Congress as a result of past scuffles and disagreements. Or they are brought down by a scandal.

President Bush need not suffer from any of these in his second term. He has an agenda, a combination of leftover issues—such as making his tax cuts permanent—and the reformed entitlements of his new "ownership society." If he acts quickly, Bush can cajole his best advisers into staying another year or two. He can smooth relations with Congress by strategizing with Republican leaders, while also warming to a few Democrats. And he can pray for no scandal.

A president without an agenda is at the mercy of his opponents. Think of Bill Clinton in 1997. His main goal was fending off House speaker Newt Gingrich. So he made a deal to cut taxes and move toward a balanced budget. That amounted to accepting Republican policies, not pursuing his own. He was politically neutered. Then he got caught up in the Monica scandal and you know the rest.

In contrast, the Bush agenda is bulging. His unfinished business consists of tax cuts, an energy bill to increase oil and gas production, tort reform, faith-based programs, and filling judgeships with conservatives. All of these were thwarted in the Senate by Democratic leader Tom Daschle, whose defeat may have a chastening effect on Democrats. "That has to send a message to the party," says Bush campaign manager Ken Mehlman. "That kind of intractable opposition doesn't work."

Maybe the message will take. In any event, Bush will need Democratic allies to bring about individual investment accounts in Social Security, to introduce free market forces into our health care system, and to create incentives to saving. The White House has Democratic senators in mind: Max Baucus, Ben Nelson, the four senators from North Dakota and Arkansas. Bush hopes to make tactical alliances with one or more of them without abandoning his principles. "No one's saying it's easy," an aide comments. "It's hard." That's putting it mildly.

Then there's the national security agenda: Iraq and the war on terrorism and the campaign to spread democracy. That should keep the president focused. The Iraq election in January and the need to clean out Falluja will require enormous attention. So will Iran and North Korea. Likewise, efforts to improve relations with European countries, perhaps the only thing John Kerry convinced the nation that Bush must do to further American foreign policy. And all this touches on the matter of keeping good people. In national security, the indispensable person is not Secretary of State Colin Powell or Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld but Condoleezza Rice, the national security adviser. To keep Rice, Bush might have to elevate her to secretary of state. He'd be smart to do it.

The performance of White House staffs and cabinet departments often deteriorates in second terms. This doesn't have to happen, especially if

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Getty / Don Emmert / Photographer

McCain, Olympia Snowe, Lincoln Chafee, Chuck Hagel, Arlen Specter, Susan Collins. On many issues, Republicans won't have an operational majority. They'll need a few Democrats, and Zell Miller won't be around anymore. Bush passed up the opportunity in his first term to make Democrat John Breaux a partner on domestic issues. Breaux was ready to deal. Bush wasn't. Now Breaux is gone. The day after the election Bush said he'd "work to earn" the support of Democrats. He'd best start right away.

Scandal in Bush Two? Who knows? The first Bush term was free of a major scandal, a fact worth boasting about. The truth is that a scandal isn't automatically crippling. It was with Nixon and Watergate, but it wasn't with Reagan and Iran-contra. Why not? Reagan was an inner-directed leader able to shut out the buzz and gossip in Washington and concentrate on his agenda. Reagan's second-term accomplishments were impressive: sweeping tax reform (with Democratic support), concessions from the Soviets, victory of democracy in Central America.

Bush's can be, too. With the illness of Chief Justice William Rehnquist, the president may have to nominate a new chief justice early next year. Bush's strength is that he's not risk-averse. He's not afraid of losing. He could have trimmed the American role in Iraq for reelection purposes, but chose not to. Naming a conservative to the court would be a declaration of seriousness at the outset of his second term. Attracting a Democrat or two or three to back the nominee would show he's ready to deal for votes. A commitment to principle and a willingness to negotiate sound like they don't go together. But in politics, they do. They're the recipe for a successful presidency. ♦

Karl Rove remains as senior adviser and political director. Rove is one of those rare individuals as adept at substance as at politics. He has brought coherence to Bush initiatives, seeing to it that they make both policy and political sense. Besides, others at the Bush White House are afraid of crossing him, which is good. It cuts down on freelancing.

Bush will begin his new term with a testy relationship with Congress. But prospects are bright. Handled properly, Majority Leader Tom DeLay can get anything Bush wants through the House. But Bush has taken DeLay and other congressional Republicans for granted. He's dissed them unintentionally—which is unfortunate, considering how much he needs them. For starters, the White House must sell its ownership society to House members, many of whom are leery of fiddling with Social Security. And he must persuade them that an aggressive internationalist foreign policy is in America's interest.

The Senate is tougher. It certainly will help to have 55 rather than 51 senators. But that's hardly a filibuster-proof majority. There are moderate Republicans to worry about: John

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Truman Beats Dewey! Again!!

The plain-spoken square triumphs once more.

BY DAVID GELERNTER

On Election Day, Establishment big shots were certain that America wanted change and that the suave, sophisticated challenger *had* to beat the blunt, plain, downright embarrassing incumbent. All day long they were certain. At midnight the famous radio commentator H.V. Kaltenborn summed up the position: Harry Truman was 1.2 million votes ahead, but Thomas Dewey was going to win. At 4 A.M., Kaltenborn issued an update. Truman was more than 2 million votes ahead, and Dewey was still going to win. At 10:30 the next morning, Dewey sent Truman a telegram of concession.

When it was all over, Truman's victory margin was 4.4 percentage points; Bush's margin is a little thinner. But Truman won without a majority: He got 49.5 percent of the popular vote. (There were two bonus candidates that year: the "Progressive" Henry Wallace and Strom Thurmond the Dixiecrat.) George W. Bush is the first president in 16 years to win an absolute majority.

The elections of 1948 and 2004 resemble each other in many ways. But there are deeper analogies in play too. The plain-spoken moralist for whom religion matters greatly, the common man who seems too small for the presidency but is confronted in office by a cataclysm that re-creates him; who rises to the challenge and transcends it; who faces a tough re-election battle and wins it; who redefines the nation's mission in the world and emerges a hero—that is a traditional American story. It is Lincoln's story. (In summer 1864, prominent Republicans wanted to find a stronger candidate.) No president matches Lincoln's greatness, but in modern times this was Harry Truman's story; and today it is George W. Bush's also.

In 1948, the Democratic incumbent beat the Republican challenger. The year 2004 saw a replay of that election upside-down—which tells us something about the current meanings of "Democrat" and "Republican." Today the Democrats are the timid reactionary party with strong isolationist tendencies. Today "Democrat" equals "Reactionary Liberal." Republicans are the bold internationalist progressives—the "Tory Democrats" envisioned by Benjamin Disraeli, creator of modern conservatism, and by Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan, its late-20th-century champions.

Kerry 2004 was a lot like Dewey '48: the stylish Establishment candidate. No one could figure out exactly where he stood, but it didn't matter. He was bound to win. Bush 2004 was a lot like Truman '48: the unstylish former businessman. Both men served in the National Guard. (Truman's unit was sent to France during the First World War, and the future president served with distinction.) Bush, like Truman, did fine in local politics, was well liked by all sorts of people—but never planned to be president. Bush, like Truman, took office with no clear worldview or plan of action—but with non-negotiable moral principles. Both men developed a worldview and plan of action when they needed to, and moved up boldly to take their places in the front line of world struggle and the long line of American heroism.

Bush and Truman each redefined America's world mission for a new era by reapplying traditional American principles. When Truman became president on the death of Franklin Roosevelt in April 1945, World War II was still underway and Soviet Russia was America's more-or-less trusted ally. Roosevelt had been reluctant to heed Churchill's worried warnings about Stalin. To Churchill it was increasingly clear that Stalin would be a dangerous man after the war, with much of Eastern and Central Europe in his gigantic, triumphant Red Army's grip. Truman was uncertain at first. But before long, the Soviet Empire reared up like a killer tidal wave, and it was up to Truman to decline or accept the challenge—to lead America's retreat back into its isolationist hole or to stand up to Stalin and announce: "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." He accepted the challenge. In March 1947 he proclaimed the Truman Doctrine in a speech to Congress. "I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressure." That remained U.S. policy until the Cold War was won almost half a century later.

In Bush's first term he, too, faced an enormous looming danger. The disaster of 9/11 was closely connected to decades of previous history. No matter what religion or ideology they profess, terrorism and totalitarianism have been closely associated since the First World War. In Truman's time, the Soviets succeeded the Nazis as the world's leading terrorist-totalitarian power. When the Soviets collapsed, Arab terrorists and thug-dictators were ready for prime time. The year after the Berlin Wall fell, Saddam Hussein marched into Kuwait. Radical Arabs had long posed a deadly threat to America—but the slaughter of thousands on American soil demanded a new policy. America had to confront the far-flung enemy and

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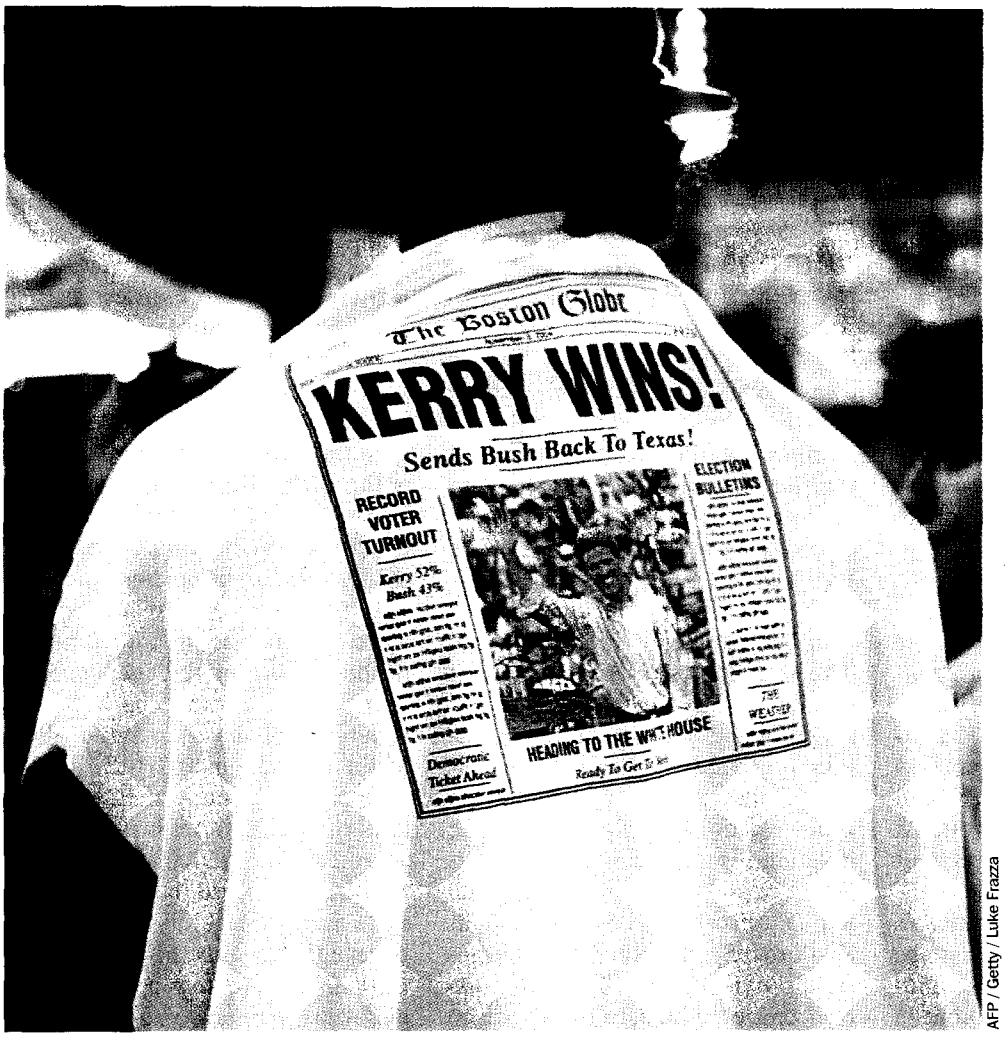

AFP / Getty / Luke Frazza

An election-night Kerry rally in Boston

fight hard until it was beaten. Bush rose to the challenge—and in November 2004 the American public ratified his boldness, as it had ratified Truman's on another November day 56 years before.

Two hard-headed, blunt-spoken pragmatists—each of whom embodied (for his own age and time) the world's vision of the perfect middle-aged, middle-American square. Both men followed presidents (FDR and Clinton) who were far slicker, more stylish, more articulate than they. They both beat challengers who were likewise. Walter Winchell (or someone) is supposed to have called Dewey "the little man on top of the wedding cake." Standards have changed: Kerry reflects the latest in high-style American manhood. But it didn't matter. The U.S. electorate has confirmed once again that America is not France.

We underestimate the extent of Truman's Christian, Bible-centered piety—in part because historians underestimate it. But if you listen to Truman, the Bible is there on the soundtrack. (He ended his first talk to Congress: "I humbly pray God in the words of King Solomon, 'Give therefore Thy servant an understanding heart to judge Thy people, that I may discern good and bad: for who is able to judge this Thy so great a people?'" He concluded his opening message to the brand new United Nations: "May He lead our steps in His own righteous path of peace.") Bush's piety will always be remembered in terms of Al Gore's disgraceful description of the president's faith: "the American version of the same fundamentalist impulse that we see in Saudi Arabia, in Kashmir, and in many religions around the world." But for Truman and Bush both, faith counted heavily when the storm broke and they had to steer straight in mountainous seas.

Truman was ridiculed and despised during his presidency and for many years afterward. Today we see him more clearly. He made lots of mistakes. He was no genius and no one ever mistook him for one. (Least of all Truman himself.) And yet: He didn't give a damn what anyone thought of him. He wanted to do right, and to put America in the right, and to see America thrive. Harry Truman, provincial hick, was the last man you'd ever have cast in the role of farsighted American hero—assuming you knew nothing about America. In the event he rejected isolationism, accepted the challenge, joined the fight, and did us proud. George W. Bush has done likewise.

One day Bush will depart the presidency. He will leave the nation transformed; and when he goes, people will praise him the way Eisenhower praised Truman after Election Day '48, for his "stark courage and fighting heart." Or maybe they will say what Truman told the nation about FDR, in Archibald MacLeish's words—"The courage of great men outlives them to become the courage of their people and the peoples of the world." Yet the greatest achievement, now as in '48, is the American people's. America really *doesn't* give a damn what Europe or the *New York Times* or Hollywood or the worldwide professoriate has to say. It tries hard to do right, and more often than not it succeeds. ♦

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The Other Losers Tuesday Night

The failed media effort to oust George W. Bush.

BY STEPHEN F. HAYES

"WE'D RATHER be last than wrong." So said Dan Rather anchoring election night coverage for CBS. He was apparently serious. That he could say this with a straight face only weeks after presenting the world with forged documents to bring down the president should cement his reputation as the least trusted man in America.

Dan Rather is just a small part of a much bigger story. His careless reporting and, later, dogmatic defense of his errors were but one episode in the media's long offensive against George W. Bush.

The assault began in July 2003, when Joseph Wilson accused the president of lying. Wilson's charges have since been thoroughly discredited and the author of *The Politics of Truth* revealed as unreliable. But the damage was done. Wilson's claim that the Bush administration had knowingly cooked intelligence provided the prism through which many reporters viewed the election.

For some 16 months, then, journalists at the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* and the television networks saw themselves not as conveyors of facts but as truth-squadders, toiling away on the gray margins of political debate to elucidate the many misstatements, exaggerations, and outright lies of the Bush administration and its campaign affiliates. Sometimes these "fact-check" pieces were labeled "news analysis." More often, they were splashed on the front page as straight news or presented on the evening news.

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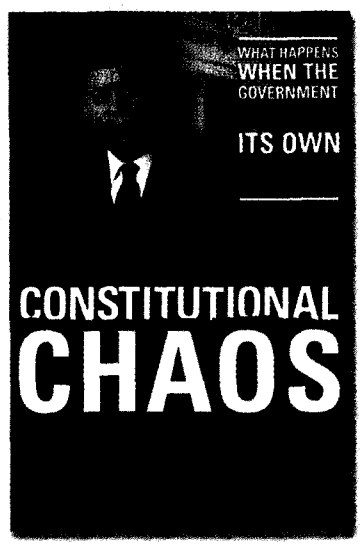
Many of these reporters were trained at the best universities in the country. They fancy themselves *thinkers*, not mere scribes. They go to work every day to tell us not what the Bush administration has said, but what it has left unsaid. They are scornful of the president's "simple" worldview—where Americans are good and terrorists are evil, where nations are with us or against us—and suspicious of his motives. They inhabit a world where Bush administration policymakers are incapable of telling the truth and "intelligence officials," especially those who provide them leaks, are unimpeachable. They knew that the Bush campaign lied more than the Kerry campaign and that when the Kerry campaign lied it was of little or no consequence.

Think I'm exaggerating? Consider the memo written some three weeks before the election by ABC News political director Mark Halperin.

"[T]he current Bush attacks on Kerry involve distortions and taking things out of context in a way that goes beyond what Kerry has done," Halperin wrote. As a consequence, ABC has "a responsibility to hold both sides accountable to the public interest, but that doesn't mean we reflexively and artificially hold both sides 'equally' accountable when the facts don't warrant that. . . . It's up to Kerry to defend himself, of course. But as one of the few news organizations with the skill and strength to help voters evaluate what the candidates are saying to serve the public interest [sic]. Now is the time for all of us to step up and do that right."

Halperin was way behind. His colleagues had been on the job for



Judge Andrew Napolitano makes a solid case on the pattern of government abuse in America's criminal justice system, leading him to establish his general credo:

"A GOVERNMENT THAT BREAKS ITS OWN LAWS IS NOT YOUR FRIEND."

"This book will open your eyes."
—Bill O'Reilly

"Judge Napolitano courageously exposes the best kept dirty little secret in law enforcement: The government breaks its own laws every day and gets away with it. This book is a wake-up call for all who value personal freedom and limited government."
—Rush Limbaugh

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months. Here is a brief, random review of their effort.

Joseph Wilson – When Wilson claimed that his clandestine work proved the Bush administration was lying about alleged Iraqi attempts to procure uranium from Niger, he was lionized as a courageous truthteller willing to stand up to a corrupt and deceitful administration. Oops. In fact, the bipartisan Senate Intelligence Committee review of pre-Iraq war intelligence concluded that Wilson's findings contradicted his earlier public claims and that despite his insistence that his wife, undercover CIA operative Valerie Plame, had had nothing to do with his selection, his work was undertaken after she recommended him for the job. The media buried those reports.

Richard Clarke – Clarke, a former White House counterterrorism czar, was similarly celebrated when he published a book criticizing the Bush administration's conduct of the war on terror and the Iraq war. The Fox News Channel released a transcript of a background briefing Clarke gave while he was still at the White House in which Clarke praised some of the very efforts he would later criticize. Most journalists focused on the propriety of Fox's action, not the contradictions in Clarke's accounts. Clarke also argued that Iraq had never supported al Qaeda, "ever." Several months later, the final 9/11 Commission report, however, quoted an email Clarke had written in 1999 in which he cited the existence of an agreement between Iraq and al Qaeda as evidence that Saddam Hussein had assisted al Qaeda with chemical weapons. Most journalists ignored the revelation.

Dan Rather – The CBS anchor aired a story about "new" documents suggesting that the young George W. Bush had received preferential treatment from political big-wigs to avoid serving in the Vietnam war. The documents were forged—something CBS had been warned about *before* the story was broadcast. When numerous forensic document experts concluded that the memos were fraudulent, Rather lashed out at his critics as partisan hacks and spoke of the supposed broader truth of the allegations. Although CBS later backed away from the story, Rather never apologized to President Bush.

James Bennett

The Missing Explosives – Eight days before Election Day the *New York Times* published a major story about missing high explosives in Iraq. The *Times*'s account was based largely on an erroneous assessment from IAEA chief Mohamed El Baradei. The *Times* collaborated on the piece with *60 Minutes*, and a producer from CBS admitted that they had hoped to hold the story for October 31—two days before voters would go to the polls.

These are some of the big ones. There are dozens of smaller examples. Knight-Ridder newspapers reported that President Bush had claimed an "operational" relationship between Iraq and al Qaeda in a speech he delivered in Tennessee. He had said nothing close. The *Washington Post* omitted a key phrase from one of Vice President Dick Cheney's appearances on *Meet the Press*, an omission that inverted his meaning. And on it goes.

Evan Thomas, a veteran correspondent for *Newsweek*, offered a refreshingly candid assessment of the impact of a pro-Kerry media before the election, saying it could provide the Massachusetts senator with a 15-point bump. Thomas later revised this estimate down to 5 points. There's no way to know, of course, but I believe his first guess was more accurate.

What does all of this mean? Will there be a postelection rapprochement?

We're not off to a good start. Minutes after President Bush thanked the country for electing him to a second term, Mark Halperin, author of the ABC memo, called the president a "lame duck."

Here we go again. ♦

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Litigate This!

There were more lawyers than cheaters in Ohio.

BY KATHERINE MANGU-WARD

Columbus, Ohio

IF YOU LISTENED very carefully as Election Day dawned, you could hear the sound of a thousand wingtips creaking as their lawyer-occupants leaned expectantly forward, ready to hustle across the state of Ohio with their eyes peeled for "voting irregularities." Florida 2000, you got the sense, had been just a warmup.

Lawyers with varying degrees of expertise in the fine details of election law descended on Ohio (and Florida and other presumed hot spots) from across the country. Weighing in with 115 volunteers in Franklin County alone, the Election Protection coalition (a project of People for the American Way, the NAACP, the AFL-CIO, and four or five dozen other assorted pro-Kerry groups) was dominant at the polling places, with an all-day presence at the dozens of schools, churches, and rec centers where county residents voted. By 6 A.M., their teams were pouring out the back door of the AFL-CIO building in Columbus and into the suburban wilderness.

I tagged along behind one four-woman group dispatched to a suburban elementary school. They spied their first "irregularity" within moments of arriving. Two women in white windbreakers had stationed themselves well inside the 100-foot perimeter set up by Ohio law to keep potential interlopers of all kinds away from polling sites. The windbreaker women were carrying binders and verifying that the people in line were voting in the right precinct. They wouldn't say what group they were with, and a small fuss quickly became a clamor and threatened to escalate into an election-observer West Side Story when it was discovered that the windbreakers' plastic shopping bags were full of Democratic campaign literature. They were a Voting Rights Team stumping for Kerry—same church, different pew.

Cell phones sprouted from every handbag, and various headquarters were consulted. After some wary circling, excuses were proffered *sotto voce* ("I think my hair is gelled too tight to my head, that's why I have a headache") and asses were covered ("I'm going to fill out an incident report . . . and I would appreciate if the right person is specified. I don't want to be drawn into somebody else's drama"). Finally, TV talkshow conflict-resolution techniques were employed ("I really felt offended by that because I heard you on the phone") and peace was made.

No sooner was the Voting Rights Team safely nudged outside the perimeter than another crisis confronted the Election Protection lawyers. In a blatant attempt at electioneering, a grade-schooler displayed a sign reading "Vote NO on Issue 1" (the same-sex marriage ban) in the window of his school bus. Written on a torn-out leaf of notebook paper, the sign was just inches from the 100-foot boundary. The school bus quickly pulled away, however, and the crisis was averted.

It started to rain harder, and the wind kicked up. "If you have any problem voting, any problem at all, you just come right back out here and tell me!" one lawyer would holler as voters went by. She was roundly ignored, as each voter made a mad dash for the door. One of the lawyers turned up her collar and stepped just inside the 100-foot perimeter to take refuge under a tree.

This time, no one raised a fuss.

***

Across town, on the 11th floor of a snazzy office building, there are cries of dismay around a conference table. Someone has opened another jumbo bag of M&Ms, ruining the Election Day diets of a dozen lawyers fielding fraud complaint calls for the Ohio Republican party. As they listen, the lawyers pace around the room and stare out of the floor-to-ceiling windows at rainy downtown Columbus. Many of the calls are small potatoes—long waits, petty squabbles—but rumors fly: "Did you hear that someone brought a busload of 30-40 people and demanded that they receive provisional ballots?" "Did you hear one of the voting machines had 5,000 votes on it before the polls even opened this morning?" "Did you hear that Democrats are *inside* the polling places wearing 'Ask Me' tags and pretending to be election workers?"

The last charge, at least, turned out to be more or less true. Dispatched to Koebel Elementary School to investigate claims of electioneering and get an affidavit from the on-site Republican challenger were two tired but cheerful out-of-town lawyers on the GOP's Roving Legal Team. They denied that the use of the word "Roving" was subtle homage to Saint Karl, but he would surely have been pleased with the work they were doing. When they arrived at Koebel, the scene inside the gym resembled a hurricane refugee center. "Just need some cots in there," said one of the lawyers.

The trademark white windbreakers of the Voting Rights Team were in evidence here, too. Though they wouldn't give an institutional affiliation at the first polling place, here they came right out and said that they were with the Democratic party. With no Election Protection lawyers (or anyone else) to keep them in check, they had made them-

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selves at home. White windbreakers were at the door of the polling place, they were chatting with voters at the head of the line, and they were all wearing badges that said "Need Help? Ask Me. Voting Rights Team staff." One woman sporting the badge was standing five feet from a voting booth. Hearteningly, she turned out to be a certified Democratic challenger (and thus one of the few windbreakers legitimately inside the polling place). Disheartening, she also turned out to be the wife of one of the candidates for Franklin County treasurer.

Clearly somewhat taken aback by the situation, the Roving Legal Team got to work investigating. The affidavit took an hour to record. When they were done, it was back to the call center to get the affidavit typed, notarized, and ready to add to a growing pile in preparation for a possible Republican lawsuit. "It's not the most outrageous thing I've ever seen," admitted one lawyer, "but let's get it processed. It could be important, I guess."

***

Late in the day, the call center of the Election Protection offices bore all the signs of temporary but intense occupation—soda cans, bones from chicken wings, abandoned marker boards. Officially known as the Legal Command Center (though "no one likes the term," according to one volunteer) the digs are a far cry from the GOP's tasteful, glass-paneled conference room. It's a white-walled, semi-windowless space on the third floor of the AFL-CIO building. On the wall is a huge poster decorated with a kinte cloth pattern that reads: "Don't let NOBODY turn you around. This Election Day African Americans won't be turned away at the polls. On Nov. 2, we got your back!"

One advantage Election Protection has on the Ohio Republican legal operation, though, is precinct maps, and lots of 'em. The maps are not coded for Democratic and Republican areas, but voting patterns are known. When someone notices a batch of complaints from New Albany it sparks this overheard conversation: "New Albany, huh. Oh, not our target area. I get it. That's why it wasn't on the radar earlier." New Albany, on the northeast side of Columbus, is 60-40 Republican.

One of the purposes of the call center is to log complaints into a national database in preparation for lawsuits. But the Internet database went down at 11 A.M., so they became primarily a voter information hotline. This is fine with most of the people there, who seem pleased to be helpful.

"It's not the most outrageous thing I've ever seen," admitted one lawyer, "but let's get it processed. It could be important, I guess."

When the DNC files a suit about the long waits outside polling places that have caused most of the day's complaints, an idling Election Protection spokesperson, who hopes to be admitted to the bar soon, sighs gratefully, "They saved us the trouble of filing anything." A man with a graying ponytail and a polka dot tie agrees that the news is good. The DNC should file the suit, he says, since "they've got the bucks."

According to the spokesperson, the Legal Command Center had no reports of intimidation at the polls "other than the occasional partisan person who was too aggressive." And even though it appears that "every ruling went in favor of the challengers, there was less in the way of organized, structured challenges" than they expected.

Indeed, the only report of a successful challenge came from the Republican call center rumor mill. "There was one kid" at the polls as a challenger, who "was there when someone came in and gave a name and street address. The kid lived on that street, and he knew everyone on that street, and he said, 'You don't live on that street.' The voter left."

***

It was 9:00 P.M., the polls were closed, and everyone agreed it was getting late. But not late enough to know which way the race was breaking. The Ohio Republican lawyers remained on red alert. A polling place at the Howard Recreation Center was still serving voters who had been in line by the 7:30 P.M. closing time. The door had been locked then to prevent late arrivals from voting. Outside the door was a cluster of lawyers—two from the Roving Legal Team and some folks from the 11th-floor office.

Conspicuous in trench coats and blue blazers, they twiddled with their cell phones and PDAs and twittered among themselves, because people were still going in every time someone came out of the supposedly hermetically-sealed polling place. This happened pretty often. When a pizza delivery guy sneaked in as someone exited (using the time-honored technique of pizza deliverymen), they decided to get the wheels in motion to get this one entered into their file of irregularities, too. After all, they reasoned in their lawyerly way, if an election that affects the fate of the world can dangle by a chad, who's to say it can't also turn on the untimely delivery of a pizza.

But it would soon become clear that all those hours in the cold rain weren't necessary. The Kerry campaign said they wanted the votes counted, not recounted. And Bush was winning the popular vote in Ohio and nationally by a comfortable margin. When Kerry conceded at 2 o'clock on Wednesday afternoon, if you paused again to listen, you could hear the sound of a thousand lawyers reaching for their cell phones one last time—to make plane reservations to go home. ♦

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Senate Dreams and Nightmares

The Republicans pick up four seats. Now comes the hard part. BY GARY ANDRES

SENATE REPUBLICANS had a banner night on Tuesday, picking up 4 net seats and expanding their majority from 51 to 55, by staging a Sherman-like political march through the South. Big Dixie wins in states previously represented by Democrats—Georgia (where Rep. Johnny Isakson won), South Carolina (where Rep. Jim DeMint won), North Carolina (where Rep. Richard Burr won), Florida (where Mel Martinez won), and Louisiana (where David Vitter is the first Republican ever elected to the Senate)—moved the GOP one step closer to completing the southern realignment that began nearly 30 years ago.

Of course, defeating Tom Daschle in South Dakota—the first Democratic Senate leader to lose since Barry Goldwater beat Ernest McFarland of Arizona in 1952—was no small prize, but the clean sweep in the South will have deeper long-term ramifications. Republicans lost only two Senate contests overall—in Illinois, where Barack Obama enjoyed his expected triumph, and in Colorado, where Ken Salazar beat Pete Coors.

Yet while an expanded Senate majority is good news for Republicans, it won't automatically translate into legislative success. A combination of new Democratic tactics and old Senate rules still leaves the minority the power to frustrate the Republicans' legislative agenda in the next Congress. A sober look at some history is instructive.

When Lyndon Johnson was Senate Democratic whip in the early 1950s, he carved out a role negotiating procedural and policy problems with lawmakers of both parties before bills reached the floor, as Robert Caro recounts in *Master of the Senate*. Johnson's powerbrokering built his institutional stature, but also greased the passage of many bills.

Moving legislation is more complicated these days. Indeed, Johnson might not recognize his old stamping ground. No stranger to political infighting, LBJ would nevertheless be appalled by the belligerent behavior of certain Senate Democrats today.

"This is an institution that plays 21st-century politics, but runs on 18th-century rules," says Marty Gold, a former senior Republican leadership aide. Moving legislation is so difficult that words like "majority" no longer have the meaning we learned in 8th-grade civics. Johnson's successors as Democratic leader, though in the minority now, have both the means and the motive to hijack the Senate agenda, and they do it virtually every day.

This explains the lack of progress on pieces of the GOP agenda, such as making the tax cuts permanent, reforming tort law, and continuing welfare reform. It's also why next year many activists and pundits will ask: If Republicans control the House and Senate with expanded majorities, why aren't they getting more done?

They'll be less puzzled if they think of the contemporary Senate as the Wild West, with desperado lawmakers jumping out from behind rocks at any time, wounding administration nominees, and shooting down legislation regardless of merit. The real question is how anything at all gets accomplished in a hyper-partisan body operating under rules designed in an era of greater comity and manners.

Unlike Lyndon Johnson, who quietly twisted arms in the cloakroom, today's Senate Democratic leaders play a pugnacious game. Where LBJ removed obstacles to the passage of legislation, they throw them up. This year they regularly filibustered circuit court nominees (10 so far this Congress). They refused previously routine unanimous consent requests to go to conference, thereby blocking lawmakers from reconciling competing versions of legislation passed by the two houses. They routinely derail legislation negotiated between chairmen and ranking minority members in committee with hosts of non-germane amendments and endless debate. None of this is likely to change with 55 Republicans.

"This is now a 60-vote chamber," former Senate parliamentarian Bob Dove told me. "It didn't used to be that way." Before 1975, it took 67 votes to break a filibuster, and the filibuster was used sparingly. "Back then the filibuster was used only on big issues," Dove told me. "Many of the southern Democrats felt if it was used too often it would trivialize the tactic, making it easier to end potential filibusters on civil rights issues." Since the rules changed in 1975, filibusters have become more frequent and of broader application. For example, until this Congress, the filibuster was never used to block confirmation of circuit court judges.

In Johnson's day, too, senators were often willing to cross party lines to promote their regional or ideological interests. LBJ could troll for support in what Dove calls a "four-party Senate," comprising liberal northern Democrats, conservative southern Democrats, conservative Republicans, and eastern (liberal) Republicans. "Patching together 51 senators in a less partisan environment from that universe was a little easier," Dove says. In today's "two-party" Senate, neither side has the numbers to win

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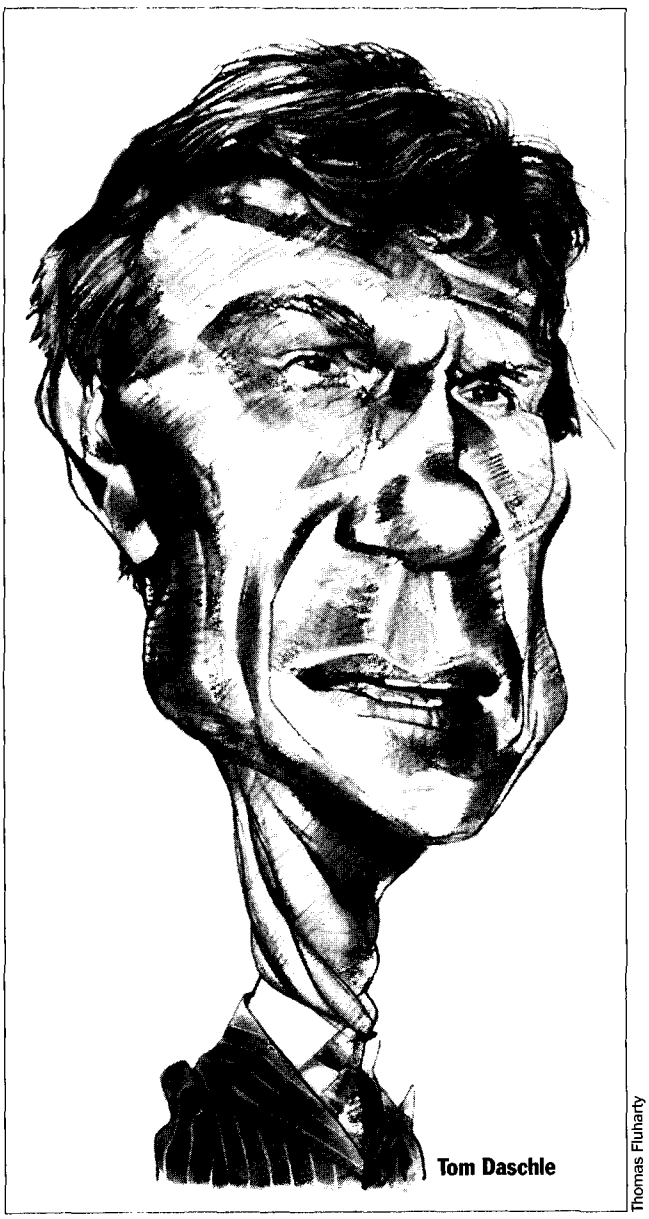
once an issue becomes politicized and lawmakers draw partisan swords.

Yet if the procedures are the means of obstruction, what are the motives? "The Senate is the last line of defense for the Democrats in the current institutional makeup," one veteran Senate leadership aide told me. "They don't control the White House, and the rules of the House prohibit the minority from having any input. The Senate is one place where they can have an impact."

Internal Senate Democratic politics also plays a role. The class-action reform bill aborted earlier this year is a good example. After falling one short of the 60 votes needed to end a filibuster last year, reform proponents negotiated substantive changes and announced they had 61 solid votes for the bill. Yet when Majority Leader Frist sought to bring up the new version, he faced a host of non-germane amendments, including drug reimportation and the minimum wage. "The non-germane part of the bill would have been bigger than the underlying class action legislation," a Senate Republican leadership aide told me. "And every time we agreed to do another non-germane amendment, they wanted more."

Which is where internal Senate politics came into play. The job of convincing senators to agree to limit their amendments fell to Democrats like Tom Daschle, Harry Reid, and Chris Dodd. Daschle opposed the bill, so he had no incentive to work out a procedural compromise. Reid and Dodd had other considerations. Senate watchers believe the two might run against each other for Democratic leader. "A race like that could come down to one vote," a lobbyist with insights into the process told me. "Why would either one of them want to tell any of their colleagues not to offer a non-germane amendment?" So even with 60 votes favoring a class-action policy compromise, the Senate was paralyzed, and the legislation died.


Tom Daschle

Thomas Fluharty

"Class action was an example of how the environment of trust has deteriorated," Gold says. "You can't blame the Democrats for wanting to offer non-germane amendments. That's part of the Senate tradition. But you can't blame the Republicans for wanting some kind of assurance that the process would end. The Democrats would not give them that." Most observers I talked to agree with Gold that the Democrats' inability to settle on an endgame doomed the legislation.

But who's really to blame, the people or the process? Gold reminds me that until 1958 Lyndon Johnson operated with tight majorities and even more stringent rules for breaking a filibuster. Like many others, Gold believes the chamber the Framers tried hardest to insulate from politics has become "a partisan quicksand pit."

Gold also believes television has contributed to the partisan rancor. "The Senate worked out the impeachment rules in two hours in closed session," he says. That probably would not have happened if the proceedings had been on C-SPAN.

Clearly, our expectations about moving a legislative agenda through the Senate need to be recalibrated. To say "Republicans 'control' the Senate is not even close," Dove told me before the election. And there's little chance either of internal procedural reform—for which Senate rules require an even higher 67-vote supermajority—or of Democratic accommodation. For all practical purposes, the term "majority" is a misnomer in the Senate.

If we could channel the spirit of LBJ, he'd doubtless agree that the only "control" the majority has in today's unmanageable Senate is the power to checkmate the other party's initiatives. Nor will the Republicans' four net reinforcements allow them to overcome a determined Democratic minority with the means and motivation to obstruct. Even as they celebrate Tuesday's victory, then, Republicans face political challenges that are daunting. ♦

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Sins of Commission

Europe's parliament turns on the church.

BY CHRISTOPHER CALDWELL

Strasbourg

DEMOCRACY, IN ITS WAY, is on the march in Europe, too. The European Union's 25-country parliament, which sits in Strasbourg, is often ridiculed as a feckless talking shop and a retirement home for politicians who could never get elected to their national parliaments. Last week, though, at a time when Europeans were more riveted by the Bush-Kerry race than by what was going on in their own countries, the European parliament suddenly rendered itself (depending on how you look at it) either more democratic or more dangerous.

Incoming European Commission president José Manuel Durão Barroso presented the parliament with a slate of 25 new commissioners. In the last days of October, the parliament rose in rebellion against Barroso's choice for justice minister, the Italian philosopher Rocco Buttiglione. Since the Commission serves as the E.U.'s executive branch (albeit an unwieldy, 25-headed one), the parliament has traditionally been allowed only to accept or reject it as a bloc. Parliament has never had the right to an advise-and-consent role such as the U.S. Senate enjoys. Until now. Barroso saw that the parliament had the will—and the votes—to reject Buttiglione even if it meant shutting down the European government. He postponed nominating the commission, promising to do "what is necessary, what is sufficient" to get the needed votes. Everyone knew what that meant. Three days later, Buttiglione withdrew his name from nomination.

There was an era—running roughly from the dawn of time until about three months ago—when Rocco Buttiglione would have been considered an adornment to any parliament or pan-European body. He is a scholar of international distinction; fluent in English, French, German, Spanish, and Polish; the author of several books of philosophy, theology, and sociology; and a cabinet minister in the present Italian government. But, deplorably, in the parliamentarians' view, he is also a devout Catholic who belongs to the political right. He founded a conservative Catholic group called Comunione e Liberazione in 1968 and has made his biggest scholarly mark outside of Italy with the authoritative 1978 study *Karol Wojtyla: The Thought of the Man Who Became Pope John Paul II*. The Pope counts him as a friend.

Along the way, Buttiglione had said and written much that piqued the interest of the European parliamentarians, including a 1989 speculation on whether AIDS was "divine punishment." He had vocally opposed abortion and aired misgivings about artificial insemination. When the subject of homosexuality and sin arose during hearings on his portfolio, Buttiglione stressed that the moral language of religion and the legal language of politics didn't belong in the same conversation. Buttiglione promised to respect the rights of minorities. He noted that it was his interrogators who had introduced the concept of sin, and declared that any Catholic of any description, asked the same questions, "would have given much the same answers." But the parliament didn't buy it. His candidacy was, from that point on, doomed.

The singling-out of Buttiglione did look suspiciously like a bunch of progressives gathering round the dead horse that is European Christianity and giving it a few joyous kicks—especially since no such scrutiny awaited the seven former Communists who were nominated to the commission alongside him. Buttiglione's Catholic supporters chalked his rejection up to "secular fundamentalism"; from the Vatican, Cardinal Martino called it a "secular Inquisition." But the parliamentarians themselves called it a triumph of democracy, a golden moment in the political consolidation of Europe. Most of those involved in the vote insisted that, if religion had been involved, it was only peripherally. The English Liberal Democrat Sarah Ludford, for instance, alleged that Buttiglione, by the mere fact of serving in the Berlusconi government, was "complicit in widespread nonrespect for the rule of law."

There was indeed a great deal of ordinary, nonreligious politics involved in the rejection of Buttiglione. The E.U.'s Socialists, the second largest party in the continental parliament, led by Martin Schulz, had had it in for him. It was Schulz who led a gang of members hooting Silvio Berlusconi when the Italian premier addressed the parliament last year. Berlusconi turned to the bald, bearded, and bespectacled Schulz, and told him that, in Italy, "a producer is now shooting a film about the Nazi concentration camps. I propose you to play the role of capo."

Barroso also managed to offend Old Europe on the inextricable matters of Iraq and French *grandeur*. First, as Portuguese prime minister, he had backed the war to unseat Saddam Hussein. Second, he had saddled the French with a secondary commission job—transportation—after years in which they had been able to command top posts. Jacques

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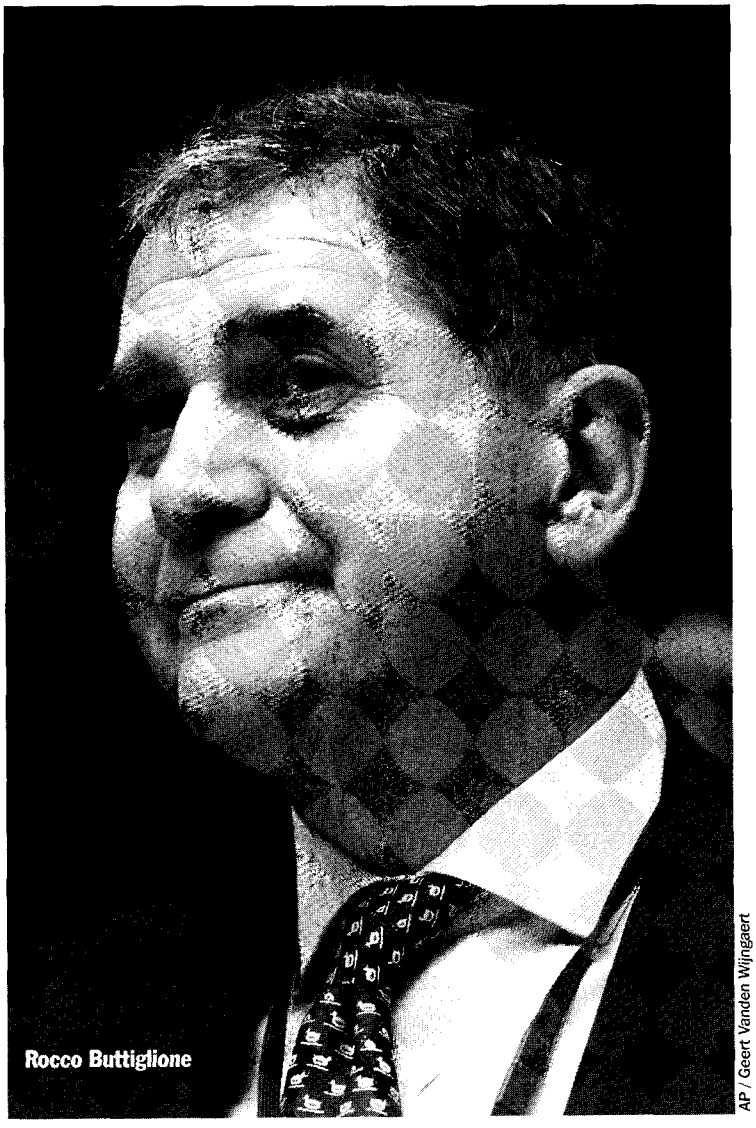
Chirac took an intense interest in the Buttiglione affair, according to *Le Monde*, even calling Barroso to say he wouldn't accept a commission voted in primarily by the right. Buttiglione's departure opens the possibility of a reshuffle in which France could once again claim a top portfolio.

But sometimes journalists can be direct where politicians and activists must pussyfoot around. An editorial in London's left-wing *Independent* was refreshingly forthright: "There have been dark mutterings about anti-Catholic and anti-Christian prejudice," the paper wrote, "as though Buttiglione is somehow the victim in all this, when the simple truth is that his views are in direct conflict with notions of equality and civil rights enshrined in European and national conventions." That gets to the nub of the matter. These notions of equality and civil rights, which the Catholic church has mostly endorsed and applauded throughout the consolidation of the E.U., now reveal themselves as unambiguously incompatible with institutional Christianity in Europe.


Rocco Buttiglione

AP / Geert Vanden Wijngaert

And perhaps with any organized religion. As the parliamentary sketch-writer Matthew Parris, a gay former aide to Margaret Thatcher, wrote in a London *Times* op-ed entitled "Sweep out religious superstition which will not tolerate me":

> I think Signor Buttiglione has indeed been the victim of anti-Christian discrimination, and that such discrimination is now in order. . . . Catholic, evangelical Christian, Orthodox Judaic and Muslim teaching on homosexuality and divorce; much Muslim practice as to the status of women; some Hindu teaching on caste; and Catholic teaching on contraception and abortion are unacceptable and insulting, not only to me but also to the majority of Europeans, and the overwhelming majority of educated Europeans.
>
> I do not shrink from according special status to the educated, for they lead thought.

(So much for Parris's opposition to Hindu teaching on caste.)

Britain's *Guardian* hailed "the genuine birth of parliamentary democracy and sovereignty in the EU." Others cheered the coming-together of transnational political parties. It is understandable why European observers might extrapolate from their own *national* constitutional histories—in which parliamentary sovereignties were generally wrung out of reluctant executives—and make such claims about what happened in Strasbourg last week. But there's a difference.

The parliamentary turning points in the past came to people who had no representation. This turning point is coming at the expense of representation that citizens (regardless of their feelings on pan-European cooperation) tell pollsters they're quite content with.

But here is the most important difference between the Buttiglione affair and earlier "constitutional moments": This one has locked the E.U.'s parliament into an adversarial relationship with the religious feelings of the people it claims to represent. Suddenly the Catholic church in Europe has no more clout than any other pressure group. What are ACT-UP and the Pope? Two lobbies. Will those citizens who have been promised a referendum on the E.U.'s just-written constitution be happy with this new dispensation?

The rejection of Buttiglione is indeed a smashing victory for the apostles of democracy European-style. In another few months, it will be possible to tell whether or not it is a victory that Europe can afford. ♦

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Suckers for 'Science'

How to talk California taxpayers out of $3 billion.

BY WESLEY J. SMITH

THE PASSAGE OF PROPOSITION 71 in California (the Stem Cell Research and Cures Act) was an acute case of electoral folly. As Californians plunged headlong into a $6 billion quagmire of debt in a quixotic quest for "miracle cures" from human cloning and embryonic stem cells, they simultaneously rejected Prop. 67, an initiative that would have added a modest tax to phone bills to keep the state's endangered emergency rooms and trauma centers from shutting down.

This is a remarkable and disconcerting development. It wasn't long ago that California's trauma centers were the pride of the state and a model for the world. In the heyday of the trauma center movement, emergency rooms throughout the state were upgraded to ensure that critically injured people could receive quality care within the "golden hour," a 60-minute time frame that dramatically increases a person's chances of survival. Needless to say, such centers are very expensive. Which made them politically vulnerable after the dot-com bubble burst and the California legislature's spending binge led to a collapse of the state's finances.

The bitter irony here is that while Californians refuse to fund treatment centers that could make the difference between people living and dying today, they are pursuing treatments and cures that, if they come at all, are likely a decade or more away. What could explain such folly? Blame the awesome power of big money, big celebrities, and big hype.

Ever since President Bush limited federal funding of embryonic stem-cell research in August 2001, Big Biotech and its partners in major universities has sought to regain the advantage. Supporters of embryonic stem-cell research and human cloning courted celebrity disease and injury victims to become the campaign's spokespersons, who then testified before Congress and sat for softball interviews on *Larry King Live* and *Oprah*. Politically potent and well-funded disease victims' organizations, too, worked the halls of power, appealing to the universal human desire to alleviate suffering. Science went out the window, as advocates peddled junk biology to win the debate. And the entire campaign was funded in the millions by biotech companies and coordinated by their trade association, the Biotechnology Industry Organization.

Meanwhile, the mainstream media performed terribly, often misstating or skewing the science, hyping what could be accomplished in a reasonable time frame by biotechnology, and denigrating the moral concerns of bio-skeptics as mere religious fanaticism. Minor advances in embryonic stem-cell research were touted as proof that miracle cures were on the way, creating false expectations on the part of suffering people yearning for cures. Meanwhile, advances in adult stem cell and other non-embryonic regenerative treatments were either ignored or damned with faint praise.

When President Ronald Reagan died, most of the media (with the notable exception of the *Washington Post*) parroted the inaccurate assertion that Reagan might have been helped by embryonic stem cells—when in reality patients with Alzheimer's would probably be the last to benefit. Public hype reached its height, however, in the presidential election, with Senator John Edwards's promise that a Kerry presidency would result in disabled people getting out of their wheelchairs. A close second was Ron Reagan's speech at the Democratic National Convention, in which he promised, ludicrously, that therapeutic cloning could lead to each of us having a "personal biological repair kit" available to cure our ailments at local hospitals.

Still, despite the energetic advocacy, the issues of embryonic stem-cell research and human cloning remained at an impasse at the federal level. So, frustrated biotech fundamentalists pursued money at the state level. After the advocacy campaign described above had tilled the political soil, they quietly placed Proposition 71 on the ballot.

In a state the size of California, the only way to communicate effectively about politics is on television. That takes a lot of money. Proponents amassed a formidable fund that exceeded $25 million, paying for a load of television advertising. Heightening the effect was the usual pack of Hollywood celebrities, particularly Brad Pitt and the late Christopher Reeve (who taped a "Yes on 71" ad a week before he died), once again supported by patient advocacy groups.

Proponents were met in the public square by a coalition of strange bedfellows, religiously-based bioethics groups, fiscal conservatives, the Catholic church, pro-lifers, and some feminists and leftist environmentalists, who were able to amass a mere $400,000 campaign chest. And they were still in the game, until Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger—who had been the center of an intense political tug-of-war over his endorsement—shrugged off his fiscal sensibilities to endorse Prop. 71.

That led to a rout. In the end, some 60 percent of Californians acted against their own best interests by passing Prop. 71, mortgaging their fiscal future to subsidize speculative and morally controversial research for medical treatments that may never materialize. ♦

Wesley J. Smith's most recent book is Consumer's Guide to a Brave New World.

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Who Will Observe the Observers?

Monitoring the U.S. elections with Bjørn, Galymzhan, the Kazakhs, and the Romanians

By Matt Labash

Raleigh, NC

Despite how effortless Jimmy Carter makes it look, there's nothing easy about monitoring elections. Take the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), a body comprising 55 member nations (including the United States), whose monitors have suffered all manner of indignities. In Croatia, their chopper was shot down, and in Macedonia, their car set alight. In Kosovo, OSCE staff were attacked, while in Moldova, they were hit with kefir, a yogurt-like dairy product.

But sometimes, words can hurt more than flying yogurt. So the unfriendly reaction must've stung the OSCE, when they announced earlier this year that at the invitation of the State Department, 60 of their non-American members would fan out across the United States to monitor our presidential election in light of last cycle's Florida fiasco. The announcement was greeted with scorn, to put it mildly. Many Americans regarded this as a transparent effort by the OSCE to jab us in the eye, treating America like some third-rate banana republic. After all, it is we who usually bring democratic enlightenment to the likes of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and other far-flung corners of the globe, and not the other way around.

But fair is fair. One of our own congressmen, Florida Democrat Alcee Hastings, is president of the OSCE's Parliamentary Assembly, and that must speak to the unimpeachable integrity of the organization, if you'll pardon the expression (since the former federal judge is one of the few to have been impeached by Congress for perjury and accepting bribes). A little turnabout would seem to be called for. So in that spirit, I headed off to Capitol Hill shortly before Election Day for the OSCE monitors' orientation. There I made contact with the four-man parliamentary delegation from Kazakhstan, which was headed to North Carolina to monitor our election.

We all have our favorite Stan, and Kazakhstan is mine. I don't know much about the place, but have taken a shine to it from watching Borat, the clueless Kazakh reporter on HBO's comedy showcase, *Da Ali G Show*. Played by Sacha Baron Cohen, Borat, in trying to ingratiate himself to Americans, blithely references his own country's horrors, making (false) claims such as that Kazakhstan's national sport is shooting a dog, then having a party. The Kazakh embassy's press secretary has protested, giving publications like the *New Yorker* point-by-point rebuttals. He has argued, for instance, that while Borat asserts Kazakhstan's favorite hobbies are disco dancing, archery, rape, and table tennis, archery is "not prominent."

I couldn't wait, then, to make the acquaintance of a bunch of disco-dancing table-tennis players, but I was disappointed when I arrived at the orientation. The program consisted of two days' worth of grueling educational seminars by the likes of Common Cause and the Federal Election Commission. An OSCE official told me, "The Kazakhs were here for about 10 minutes, then they took off. Most of them don't speak English." In fairness to the Kazakhs, I do speak English, and I couldn't take any more than 15 minutes.

Later, I made contact with the Kazakh delegation's sponsor, Galymzhan Nurmagambetov, the embassy's second secretary and a man whose name is so unwieldy, I settled on calling him "GN." In limited English, GN told me that if I were to shadow them on their monitoring duties in North Carolina, I'd need to get approval from their delegation's leader, a Norwegian member of parliament named Bjørn Hernaes. By the time I reached Bjørn, he had already arrived in Raleigh and was stuck there without a car and driver, which, along with a translator, is usually provided according to OSCE custom. "Raleigh on a

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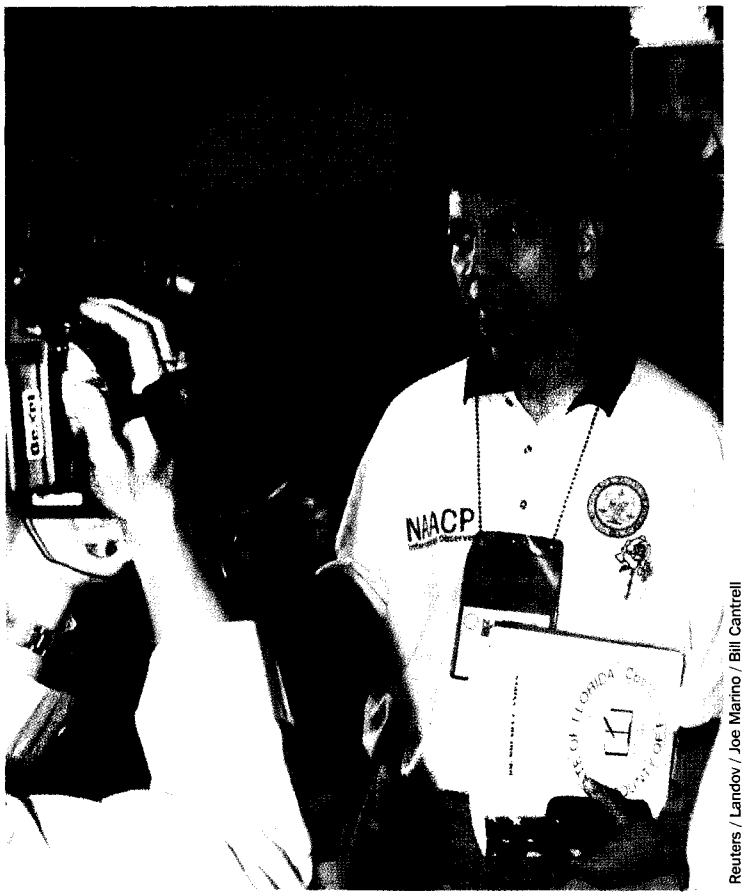
Sunday without a car is like a stone desert," he later told me. Tempted to ditch the whole mission in order to visit relatives in Florida, Bjørn seemed grateful for the prospect of my company. When I asked him the names of his Kazakh delegation-mates, he said how should he know? "Their names are so impossible, I gave the list to our Romanians."

I joined the delegation on the morning before the election for yet another lecture, this one by a University of North Carolina professor whose specialty is southern political demographics. With just seven more sessions on their schedule, they'd soon be qualified to catalog massive voter fraud. Wishing to make them feel welcome, I had studied the "Say It In Kazakh" portion of their embassy's website. "*Biz bir zhanyuiadaimiz*," I said, meaning, "We feel like family." My pronunciation might have been off. The Kazakhs, or "the Stans," as I took to calling them, since I couldn't say any of their names, looked at me confusedly. No matter. Already, stereotypes were being obliterated. The Kazakhs had a distinctly Asian look, as they are descended from Mongols. Like most Borat-watchers, I had erroneously assumed they would look like Albanian porn stars. Score one for the OSCE and fostering international understanding.



Reuters / Landov / Joe Marino / Bill Cantrell

An international observer from the Philippines, in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.

The rest of the program involved getting dragged around to the offices of various political hacks. At Kerry-Edwards headquarters, Stans One and Two raided the candy jar for dum-dums, while Stan Three pointed to a picture of John Kerry, exclaiming, "Vietnam! Vietnam!" But mostly, as we were dragged to presentations by lawyers and board-of-election types, the day was an indistinguishable blur—hours of boredom, punctuated by moments of sheer ennui. Several of the speakers seemed to have no idea the Kazakhs couldn't speak English, until GN would periodically start translating. The Stans would then put their heads together, bat the ball around among themselves, then come up with a question that called their fraud-spotting powers of observation into question. Usually along the lines of: How many Democratic senators are running for John Edwards's seat in South Carolina? Or, Why are there no political signs visible? (Raleigh's roadways are adorned with almost nothing but political signs, not that they could read them.)

One of the few bright spots of our day was lunch. Without a guide, the delegation ended up fastening on me as their de facto Sacajawea. "How are you going to get around?" I asked Bjørn, a witty and shabbily elegant Scandinavian who, when not serving as a conservative member of his parliament, runs a potato farm. "What do you mean?" he said, smiling. "We have a driver—you." I took Bjørn, the Stans, and two Romanian legislators to a naugahyde greasy spoon, reckoning they should experience authentic North Carolina barbecue. The Stans immediately bailed. "They prefer Chinese food," said an apologetic GN. "Barbecue horse for the Kazakhs," cracked one Romanian, obviously a Borat fan.

I expected my companions to be anti-American Eurocreeps, but was pleasantly surprised. Romanian MP Gyorgy Tokay, a 66-year-old Ralph Nader lookalike who told me to just call him "George," did have his tongue loosened after one beer and a look around the restaurant. "Americans—why are you so fat?" he asked. He also couldn't stomach our smoking prohibitions. "It's a free country. And they do this for my own good? I want to die a sick man, not a healthy one." But with New Europe earnestness, he added, "I love Americans," and about our recent Iraq adventure, he is simpatico: "We know what it's like to live in a country led by a serial killer." Bjørn, pointing out

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that Romanians have a fresher memory of being granted liberty than do Norwegians, who suffered through Hitler, seconded the motion: "All of our constitutions are a combination of the U.S. Constitution and British ideas. . . . If it weren't for the Americans, we'd still be speaking German in Norway."

The OSCE claims in its history that the idea of a pan-European security conference was first raised by the Soviet Union in the 1950s. And it's with Soviet-style efficiency that the OSCE is sometimes still run. In addition to stranding their delegation without a car or real translator, they managed to leave a gaping hole in the Election Day itinerary, with only one scheduled stop at an actual polling place.

So Bjørn, the Romanians, the Kazakhs, and I headed to Raleigh's St. Raphael Catholic Church to watch people vote. A great furor has swept the European media over the fact that many OSCE delegations weren't given the full run of U.S. polling stations, since state law tends to be persnickety about who can approach the voting machines. But North Carolina's sunny election workers seem flattered they're here. We watch people vote for about 45 minutes, and everything is copacetic. Bjørn hangs out at a Kids Vote table, where a middle-schooler cracks open the phony ballot box to reveal that John Kerry is leading George Bush two-to-nothing. It's the only tampering we spot. Meanwhile, George buttonholes me, telling me we have to leave, since the Stans are creeping people out by videotaping them, perhaps for souvenirs. The OSCE delegation, it seems, provides the state's only example of voter intimidation.

Sixty-seven-year-old Bjørn, a good Norwegian to the last, convinces me to take a dip in the icewater Atlantic. "This is a reward for Kosovo—yes!"

Though the delegation has traveled around the world to observe our elections, official business is concluded until the returns start coming in at night, because of the OSCE scheduling gaffe. So Bjørn drafts me to take them to the beach, two hours away from Raleigh. After three days of insufferable lectures, he feels entitled: "We deserve some laziness; it's God's will I think. George, did you write down the total from the voter rolls? Me neither. Shall we say 4,516?"

It's my sincere wish that the Stans join us. But GN, while initially enthusiastic, seems uncertain. "In my country we wear these shorts, which I don't know are permitted here," he says, tracing tight cuts across his pubic region. "You mean banana hammocks?" I say, assuring him they're permitted, albeit discouraged. "Yes," he says, "We wear these banana hams you speak of." A bit shy, GN and the Stans hook up instead with a local Russian to take them to a winery, while the rest of us go to the beach.

We have a high time there, too. From the backseat of my minivan, George keeps bellowing that he needs to buy a P. Diddy "Vote or Die" T-shirt. When we arrive at a deserted beach on Cape Fear, George, who claims to be "in a beeg love with the sea," stays in his suit, content to finally smoke in peace. Romanian member of parliament Vasile Mois, who looks like a cross between Lenin and renowned Satanist Anton La Vay, has forgotten his swimsuit but goes ahead and strips down to his banana-ham skivvies anyway. Sixty-seven-year-old Bjørn, a good Norwegian to the last, convinces me to take a dip in the icewater Atlantic. "This is a reward for Kosovo—yes!" he says, splashing around like a dolphin.

When we return that night to the board of elections, our Coalition of the Ambivalent comes unwound. The Stans show up with a new translator, an ethnic Russian named Dmitri, who the Europeans suspect is some sort of diabolical apparatchik foisted on the Kazakhs after GN was disposed of (actually, after a day at the winery, GN had come down with an upset stomach and stayed in their minivan in the parking lot—"I usually drink whiskey, not wine," he later tells me). The Kazakhs are cranky that they are still stuck on field trips to election sites, instead of getting their hands dirty ferreting out election fraud, a subject they should be expert in, being from Kazakhstan. George insists to me that one of the more belligerent Stans is half in the bag, and implores me to call for a "strategic retreat" of their delegation, before there is some sort of embarrassing international incident.

Later, back at the hotel, Bjørn tells me that he has calmly explained to the Kazakhs that the reason they hadn't gotten an all-access pass to the polling sites wasn't because Americans are Potemkin propagandists who were concealing a seedy election process, but because our decentralized system means that state election law trumps invites to foreigners by Colin Powell. And besides, if they're dissatisfied with the program, they might want to take it up not with the Americans, but with the OSCE. I ask him if he plans to do the same. "There's a lot of things I discuss with my chauffeur," he says, smiling, "but not that." I can't help but feel sorry for him. Monitoring the world's leading democracy is no day at the beach. Except, of course, when it is. ♦

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Wooing Purple America

How the Democrats can win again, if they really want to

By John J. DiIulio Jr.

In 2000, the polls had Bush winning the popular vote. He went on to lose it by more than 3.5 million votes. In 2004, pollsters on election eve said the race was "too close to call." The next day, exit polls predicted a comfortable Kerry victory. Then on election night, the Bush-Kerry national popular vote split turned out to be no squeaker, but 51 percent to 48 percent. So are the pollsters all wet?

No, just damp. Both in 2000 and in 2004, most polls, including exit polls, were correct *within their margins of error*. But let's all finally understand just how wide those margins are. If a poll predicts a 51-48 percent Bush-Kerry split with a margin of error of plus or minus 3 points, all it is actually predicting is an outcome somewhere in the vast territory between a 9-point lead for Bush (54-45 percent) and a 3-point lead for Kerry (51-48 percent).

Polling, never an exact science, is now an increasingly questionable art. Properly conducted, a poll can capture what 250 million citizens think by interviewing as few as 1,500 people. The key is random sampling: Every voter must have an equal chance of being interviewed.

Unfortunately, many polls this election season were based on smaller-than-ideal samples. With people trying to avoid telemarketers and using call-screening devices, pollsters apparently had more trouble than usual getting people to answer their calls and hence assembling reliable samples and results. To overcome such difficulties will cost more money than some news organizations and other purchasers of polls seem prepared to spend. Instead, this year some news organizations took a cheap short-cut by averaging results from competing polls. This is like trying to build a functional car motor by assembling parts from as many fine or faulty engines of as many different makes as you can find.

The Election Day exit polls were misleading, but so were the forecasts made many months ago (all before Labor Day) by political scientists. The same was true in 2000, when most election-forecasting models had Gore beating Bush handily (winning from 53 percent to 60 percent of the popular vote). This year, several of the most respected models had Bush winning 54 percent or more of the vote, and the median forecast for the seven leading models was 53.8 percent for Bush (including one model that had Bush at 49.9). That is "only" 3 points and change off from Bush's actual election-night tally; but then a 3-point shift from the actual winner to the second-place challenger would have changed the popular-vote victor in a half-dozen of the presidential elections since 1956.

Different models embody different assumptions and crunch different data, but most include polling results (garbage in, garbage out), presidential approval ratings (subject to wartime rally effects), and various measures of individual or national economic well-being (like the change in real GDP during the first two quarters of an election year, or job growth during the first 3.5 years of a president's term). In addition, some models incorporate incumbency-advantage measures and other variables.

Still, no model accurately predicted the 2000 presidential race, and none got this year's right, either. Following the 2000 forecasts, Larry Bartels of Princeton and John Zaller of UCLA combined features of 48 different models, and were thereby able retrospectively to "forecast" the 2000 presidential election within a point or two of the actual results. Summarizing the 2004 forecasts in the October 2004 issue of *Political Science & Politics*, SUNY-Buffalo's James Campbell argued that "the forecasts cannot be fairly judged by whether they predicted the candidate who won the election." After all, "each forecast expects to be wrong to some degree" because "there are

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unanticipated . . . developments in a campaign that cause votes to shift here or there." (Memo to my bookie: Pay me no matter what team I bet on next week, especially if anything unexpected happens during the game.)

But the pollsters and professors are models of intellectual rigor next to the media pundits. Remember their endless, self-confident commentaries on the coming Dean-Bush showdown? Or roll the old footage: A "backlash" against 12 years of Republicans in the White House elected Bill Clinton in 1992; but, in 1994, "angry white males" (obviously a backlash against the "backlash") put Republicans in control of the House for the first time in four decades; then in 1996, "soccer moms" (jilted by the "angry white males"?) reelected Clinton; and since 2000, "deeply divided" Americans have conveniently sorted themselves into "red states" and "blue states" (stay tuned for word on whether "security moms" love "NASCAR dads").

Sorry, but America is not red vs. blue politically. Every state, from hyper-Democratic New York to hyper-Republican Texas, mixes both red and blue opinions and populations. When you mix red and blue you get purple. The coasts are purple-blue, the South is purple-red, but the country as a whole is increasingly just plain purple.

Take religion. Yes, regular churchgoers (red) favor conservative Republicans while the nonreligious or irreligious (blue) favor liberal Democrats. But, as social science studies going back several decades have documented, about three-quarters of all Americans are somewhat religious or faith-friendly while far from being either orthodox sectarians or orthodox secularists.

As Morris Fiorina of Stanford, Alan Wolfe of Boston College, and other academics have explained, all the chatter about the country's deep division is exaggerated and oversimplified. America was not "deeply divided" when Kennedy and Nixon split the vote 50-50 in 1960, or when Carter and Ford split it 51-49 in 1976, or when Ross Perot took 18.9 percent in 1992. Today, there are many "red" state and local officials in "blue" states and vice versa, and even with our "deep divisions," at least one red state flipped blue and a few blue states turned red in this year's presidential balloting.

The issues that divide Americans in ways that matter politically are not ostensibly either-or issues like abortion that pollsters never tire asking about. Even on abortion and other hot-button issues, opinion is generally more purple than not. For instance, most citizens are pro-life but would allow abortion in cases of rape, incest, and danger to the mother's life.

Rather, the issues that most powerfully divide Americans, especially in presidential races, are what political scientists term valence issues: ideas, symbols, or conditions that elicit nearly universal public approval or nearly universal public disapproval. Nobody is for bad economic times, political corruption, or irresolute leadership; everybody wants security and warms to compassion. Valence campaigns are about associating your candidate or party with ideas, symbols, or conditions that almost everybody favors, and associating the other candidate or party with things that make almost everybody cringe. Often a single word or phrase will pack a valence punch ("compassionate conservative" or "opportunity society"). Thus, in 2004 the Democratic party platform used the words "strong" and "strength" scores of times, and speakers during the Democratic convention's first three days (even Jimmy Carter) were scripted to speak them. In the end, Kerry won the televised policy debates but lost the more vital valence war with Bush over leadership.

In this one purple nation under God, the valence issues that matter most politically in presidential elections are moral values issues.

In this one purple nation under God, the valence issues that matter most politically in presidential elections, and increasingly in other elections as well, are moral values issues. Jeffrey Bell captured this in his 1992 book *Populism and Elitism*, and every election since has only served to underline his message about "the rise of value politics."

For instance, this year in Ohio, some African Americans defected to Bush because they perceived him as sharing their concerns about gay marriage.

Most Democratic party elites still don't appreciate this electoral reality. Instead, they keep trying to sell culturally moderate-to-conservative working-class people, who call themselves middle class and who want wealth for their children, on hating rich Republicans. This tone-deaf and almost comically outdated appeal failed to win them Ohio, a state that has lost 200,000 jobs since Bush became president.

In the 1990s, Democrats wised up on crime and a few other issues that had cost them dearly, and not only in the South. But the party's leaders have yet to realize that their liberal-radical celebrity elites and extremists tend to be even less appealing to purple Americans than are the comparable right-wing Republican crew. An old Philadelphia Democratic committeeman once put it this way: "I don't like [Moral Majority fundamentalist

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preacher] Jerry Falwell or [Grateful Dead drug-culture rocker] Jerry Garcia, but if I had to pick one Jerry to watch my grandkids, I'd sure pick Falwell."

Kerry the Catholic altar boy could not muster a sincere-sounding moral lather even when speaking about his faith and how it informed his views on poverty in America. Purple America does not want proselytizing public leaders, but it is more inspired than offended by politicians who do "God talk." Nevertheless, the Democratic party elite continues to regard purple prose about the Almighty as a no-no. Unless that changes, the Democratic party, bred and led mainly by staunchly secular pro-choice liberals, will die before 2020, and there will be no resurrecting it.

It's true of course that, had 70,000 or so votes switched in Ohio, we would probably now be contemplating a President-elect Kerry. For that matter, Democrats still console themselves with the fact that had a mere 19,500 votes spread across 13 House districts shifted from Republicans to Democrats in 1994, there might still be a Speaker Foley. Presumably that type of thinking will cease before the twentieth anniversary of Republican control.

If Democrats want to win in 2006 and 2008, they really don't need to engage in any soul-searching or bloodletting. Rather, they need to catch up with Republicans, who are simply better at courting base voters while being, or at least sounding, purple to most Americans on many or most issues.

Here is one practical way for Democrats to pave a purple-nation path to victory: Try cultivating and running some religiously alive and/or pro-life but progressive Democrats against vulnerable Senate Republicans in 2006; then try giving such politicians prime-time speaking slots at the 2008 Democratic convention, just as Republicans invited several pro-choice politicians to deliver major speeches at their 2004 convention. Otherwise, the only purple Democrats will get is purple with envy over continued Republican wins in close national elections. ♦

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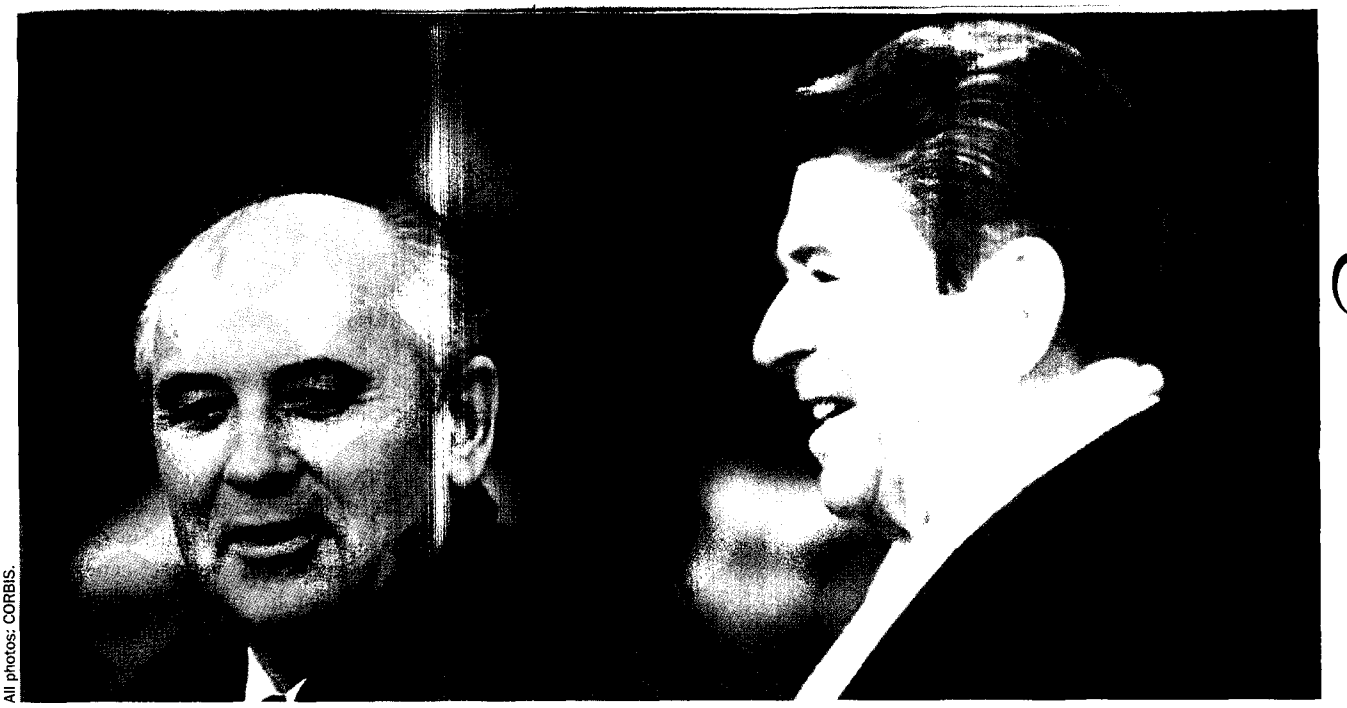

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Reagan's Victory?

How did the Cold War end? By Edmund Levin

It can't be said that Ronald Reagan ever had many fans in American academia. After he declared the Soviet Union an "evil empire," Henry Steele Commager sneered: "The worst presidential speech in American history, and I've read them all." Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., in full wise-man mode, decried the president's "crusading anti-communism," his "messianic conviction," and his view of the Soviet Union "as unchanged, unchanging, and unchangeable."

More than a decade has passed since the Cold War ended, with America's rival of a half century, to the astonishment of even the most optimistic Cold Warriors, slipping into oblivion with barely a struggle, melting to the floor like some Wicked Witch of the East. The archives of the nonexistent Soviet Union are yielding some of their secrets. Though much remains under lock and key, scholars can now thumb through once top-secret documents, including records of Gorbachev-era Politburo meetings.

So what conclusions do the professors now come to? How much credit do they give Ronald Reagan? Few academics of prominence buy the theory (popularized by Peter Schweizer in his book *Victory*) that Reagan ran the Soviet economy into the ground with his massive defense budget increases and other pressure tactics. Reagan's hard line may have pushed the Soviet Union toward reform. But the consensus is that it was Gorbachev's hare-brained way of going about it that destroyed the Soviet system.

Ending the Cold War
Interpretations, Causation and the Study of International Relations
edited by Richard K. Herrmann and Richard Ned Lebow
Palgrave Macmillan, 256 pp., $24.95

But that doesn't mean Reagan gets no credit for ending the Cold War. He receives some surprisingly high marks for his overall strategy and flexibility in dealing with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev. And research by scholars who don't praise Reagan directly lends support to his case.

Over the past decade, the study of the end of the Cold War has divided into two warring schools. "Realists" see Gorbachev's decision to retrench and accommodate the United States as the result of an inexorable power dynamic: The Soviet Union, with its planned economy in crisis, with declining growth rates, and a staggering defense burden, just could not keep up. "Constructivists," on the other hand, see the Cold War's end as the product of Gorbachev's vision, fine-tuned by Westernized advisers: "The decisive turn," as leading constructivist Robert English puts it in *Cold War Endgame*, "was propelled as much by the force of *ideas* as the imperatives of power."

Both schools are more favorable to Reagan than you might expect. Recent research based on declassified Soviet documents supports Reagan's central judgment that the Soviet Union was economically vulnerable to U.S. pressure. "I believe we live now at a turning point," President Reagan declared in an historic speech to the British Parliament in June 1982. "We are witnessing

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A young woman shouts over the Berlin Wall to her mother in 1962.

today a great revolutionary crisis in . . . the home of Marxism-Leninism, the Soviet Union," which "is in deep economic difficulty."

Well into the 1990s, the academics' conventional wisdom still maintained that Soviet economic troubles had "little causal weight" in the end of the Cold War. Realists Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, in their chapter in *Cold War Endgame* and in a series of important articles in prestigious scholarly journals, make a powerful case that Gorbachev's overwhelming motivation for ending the Cold War on American terms was economic: his country's "systemic decline" and "the rapidly escalating costs of maintaining the Soviet Union's international position."

Transcripts of Politburo meetings from 1980 to 1984, they say, show Soviet leaders to be extremely apprehensive about their country's decline. When Gorbachev became top leader in 1985, the anxiety intensified. Documents show a more "alarmist" Gorbachev than was seen in public, "making ever more insistent arguments for the necessity of international retrenchment." Brooks and Wohlforth write in the journal *International Security* that the possibility of an increasing defense burden "was truly a frightening prospect for Gorbachev."

They quote a striking statement by Gorbachev, sounding the alarm at a Politburo session on October 4, 1986: "Our goal is to prevent the next round of the arms race. If we do not accomplish it, the threat to us will only grow. We will be pulled into another round of the arms race that is beyond our capabilities, and we will lose it, because we are already at the limit of our capabilities. Moreover, Japan and the FRG (West Germany) could very soon join the American potential. . . . If the new round begins, the pressure on our economy will be unbelievable."

Wohlforth and Brooks argue that Gorbachev's "new thinking"—with compromises on arms control, and unilateral concessions, such as his historic December 1988 decision to cut the Soviet military by half a million troops—were a byproduct of necessity. "The mounting material costs of the old Soviet foreign policy" were just too high. Wohlforth and Brooks also see the effectiveness of export controls on trade with the Soviets, much maligned at the time by Reagan's opponents as counterproductive. "The Soviets had to readjust their security strategy due to the West's policy of 'economic containment.'" The documents show "there was a clear recognition . . . that the only way to reduce these Western restrictions was by moderating foreign policy."

Oddly, they never mention Reagan (or any other president). For them, systemic factors are key. But their analysis can be seen as lending strong support to the basic Reaganite doctrine that keeping up the pressure, including a military buildup, was the fastest way to end the Cold War. While they don't explicitly credit the tough U.S. stance, they point out Gorbachev's reaction to it was to make concession after concession.

In *Cold War Endgame*, Wohlforth gives space to Robert English to make the case that the conflict ended not because the U.S.S.R. ran out of gas, but because of "the singular influence of ideas and the singular leadership of Gorbachev." So, too, Vladislav Zubok, a leading light of the younger generation of Cold War historians, homes in on Gorbachev's complex personality as a critical factor in the Cold War's end. Zubok's elaborate taxonomy of Gorbachev's personal qualities and quirks—including immense self-confidence, a bizarrely exaggerated faith in the power of ideas, a certain naiveté, poor negotiating skills, a propensity for risk-taking, and a "congenital" inability to form a long-range plan—makes a strong case that, without Gorbachev, history would have been quite different. But he agrees Gorbachev's preeminent goal was stopping the arms race in the face of rising American power, and that by 1984 even the "old-thinking" Soviet leadership saw that as imperative. Elsewhere, Zubok has argued Gorbachev was concerned about the long-term threat of Star Wars and saw it as an incentive to pursue arms control. He's also noted the critical element of personal rapport—crediting Reagan and Gorbachev's "remarkable anti-nuclear synergy."

Meanwhile, in a volume called *Ending the Cold War*, some of the heavyweight academic contributors actually mention Reagan by name—and have positive things to say. Preeminent Gorbyologist Archie Brown of Oxford, for instance, considers Gorbachev the most important factor in the Cold War's end. But "Reagan was an interlocutor who made ending the Cold War easier than it might otherwise have been." He doesn't think much of Reagan's hard-line policies, but concedes "The Reagan Factor" helped end the Cold War.

Some contributors dismiss Reagan's role. The most forceful Reagan debunker is Matthew Evangelista, a

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scholar of a constructivist bent, who's director of the Peace Studies Program at Cornell. He argues that SDI (Star Wars), far from forcing the Soviets to accommodate, was a hindrance at the bargaining table: "Soviet reformers pursued (arms control) despite Star Wars," not because of it. He gives Reagan no credit whatever for the INF arms control agreement of 1987, which for the first time eliminated a whole class of nuclear weapons. "At first blush," Evangelista says, there seems to be a strong case for the INF Treaty as a "negotiation-from-strength" success story. But he argues that it was the change in Soviet leadership—with Gorbachev and his foreign minister Eduard Shevardnadze taking over—that was wholly responsible for this historic event.

But other contributors concede Gorbachev would not have had to make the concessions he did if Reagan hadn't stood firm. There would have been no INF "zero option" for Gorbachev to accede to if Reagan hadn't pushed for it in 1981 (over the objections of some of his own advisers). In the abstrusely titled "Understanding the End of the Cold War as a Non-Linear Confluence," Richard Ned Lebow and Janice Gross Stein make a clear point: The Reagan administration's initial hard line ensured that "dramatic, irreversible, and even unilateral actions on the Soviet side were probably necessary to jump start the process of accommodation."

Lebow, the volume's coeditor, and venerable Sovietologist George Breslauer expand on that point in "Leadership and the End of the Cold War: A Counterfactual Thought Experiment." They ask the intriguing question: What would have happened if Reagan had never been president? What if John Hinckley's bullet had not missed Reagan's heart by an inch and George H.W. Bush had been sworn into office? Or what if Walter Mondale had won the 1984 election?

They find that Reagan's hard-line negotiating strategy was critical to ending the Cold War. Reagan saw initial Soviet gestures as "driven by weakness." Against all obstacles, "President Reagan dug in his heels . . . and held out for maximal Soviet concessions"—a good thing, as it [illegible] out. A President Bush or Mondale "would have been more inclined [illegible] emporize," they surmise, which would have given Gorbachev more political room internally. That, they think, would have been a bad thing. "The perception that a Bush or Mondale would have settled for less" would have made it more difficult for Gorbachev to justify his concessions.

A Czech [illegible] shou[illegible], "Ivan [illegible]" to Russian soldiers o[illegible] streets of Prague in 1968.

Harvard professor Mark Kramer, editor of the *Journal of Cold War Studies*, comes to the same conclusion in a recent special issue on "The Collapse of the Soviet Union." Reagan's hard line helped Gorbachev overcome Moscow's own hard-liners: "The inability of the hard-liners to produce better results (from 1981 to 1985) undoubtedly gave the new Soviet leader greater leeway to consider 'new thinking' in foreign policy."

"Paradoxically," Lebow and Breslauer conclude, "it is worth considering the proposition that it was Reagan's maximalism and resolve, coupled with his willingness to strike deals . . . and the personal rapport and vision he shared with Gorbachev, that ended the Cold War when and how it did." A fair statement of the case for Reagan—but why that "paradoxically"? Why is it a paradox that the other side, in a weaker position, would cave in to pressure? What comes through here, perhaps, is a discomfort with the conclusion that Reagan had it right.

In fact, direct praise of Reagan for wisdom or foresight is fairly hard to come by—even among academics who believe his policy toward the Soviet Union worked. Reagan is treated as some sort of black box who mysteriously came up with the right answers. In trying to explain Reagan, Lebow and Breslauer essentially argue that his supposed simple-mindedness was a virtue. People like Reagan, "with less developed schemas," are prone "to change them dramatically" when confronted with new information, they tell us. That accounts for why Reagan realized before some of his advisers, who had "more elaborate schemas," that Gorbachev was "for real."

Columbia University professor Barbara Farnham argues something stronger in "Perceiving the End of a Threat: Ronald Reagan and the Gorbachev Revolution," which appeared in the prestigious journal *Political Science Quarterly*. (It also appears as a chapter in a book notably entitled *Good Judgment in Foreign Policy*.) She praises Reagan's "openness and intuitive intelligence," his negotiating skill (his determination not to give up Star Wars "gave him unexpected strength at the bargaining table"), and his overall approach: "Reagan's initial beliefs about the (Soviet) threat and the nature and timing of his revisions of those beliefs were reasonably sound."

But she sees Reagan's transformation from an "essentialist" who believed the

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Soviet Union was an "evil empire" to an "interactionist" willing to negotiate, as "something of a puzzle." Reagan, she tells us, confounds all the theories. Cognitive psychology, "rational-choice theory," "learning theory," and "schema theory" all say people resist revising their beliefs.

She ascribes Reagan's flexibility in part to "a belief system that was somewhat more complex than has usually been attributed to him." Her shrewd judgment is that Reagan's "ideological" view of the world—so often derided—was a critical asset. Far from seeing the Soviet Union as "unchanging and unchangeable," as Schlesinger had it, Reagan's worldview "sensitized him" to the role of ideology in the United States-Soviet conflict and the significance of Gorbachev's ideological innovations. "Reagan," she writes, "was in some sense primed to accept the reality of change because he already believed it possible, even likely."

The role of ideology in the Cold War, long scanted, is back in vogue. Here, perhaps, is the nub of a unified theory that might join the hard-headed realists and wooly-minded constructivists. "The root of the conflict was . . . a clash of social systems," Columbia University's Robert Jervis, one of the nation's preeminent international relations scholars, and no Reagan fan, wrote some time ago in the *Journal of Cold War Studies*. The Soviets had no true idea of "mutual security," he finds: "The basic Soviet view of politics (both domestic and foreign) meant that 'socialism in one country' could never be sufficient."

For the conflict to end, then, Soviet ideology had to change. Both Reagan and Gorbachev understood this. In what was a struggle between two antithetical social systems, power mattered and ideas mattered. But we learn from Vladislav Zubok that Gorbachev was a man drunk on ideas and faith in his capacity to will a new world into being, and who was also strangely lacking in a coherent conception of his country's national interest or the role of power in the world arena. Gorbachev did great things but was "not a great statesman." Zubok's Gorbachev winds up a pathetic figure—an inept negotiator outmaneuvered by Reagan's successors after the Berlin Wall's fall, "a gambler" to the end who lived in a "world of illusions."

In terms of ideas, Reagan, on the other hand, was fine-tuned for the moment while having, in Patrick Glynn's words, "an instinctive grasp of power." His conception of the Cold War's end was, as he put it: "We win, they lose." At the intersection of power and ideas, Reagan was in his element. Gorbachev, it became clear by the end, was lost. ♦

Wild Oscar

Looking beneath the mask of Oscar Wilde.

BY EDWARD T. OAKES, S.J.

No one wore so many masks in his writing and his life as Oscar Wilde—or "Wild Oscar," to borrow the moniker the Colorado lead-miners and the California gold-miners gave him during his rapturously received tour of America in 1882. But "Do masks conceal the truth or do they reveal it?" asks Joseph Pearce at the beginning of his revisionist history of the life and fate of Oscar Wilde, *The Unmasking of Oscar Wilde*.

The Unmasking of Oscar Wilde
by Joseph Pearce
Ignatius, 412 pp., $35

It surely must say something about this book, originally published in London four years ago by HarperCollins, that it was not picked up by a major house in the United States, not even by the American branch of HarperCollins, but has only now come out from the conservative Catholic firm of Ignatius Press in San Francisco. Might that not be because Pearce has not only unmasked the real Wilde (for example, he explodes the myth that Wilde died of syphilis) but has also stripped away the legends that have gathered about him during the past hundred years in the homosexual subculture, where he is known as "Saint Oscar"? ("Saint," of course, in the upside-down, Wildean sense: "We cannot go back to the saint," he said. "There is far more to be learned from the sinner.")

In Pearce's view, "Contradictions are uttered [by Wilde] for effect, intended to entertain. Contradictoriness was not Wilde's orthodoxy. It was his pose." But of course, when a person projects as many poses as did Wilde, the person too becomes something of a mask, even to himself. Not surprisingly, we learn that Wilde's attraction to Catholicism was due, at least in part, to his fascination with masks. In an early poem, "Rome Unvisited," Wilde depicts how the pope, in elevating the consecrated Host at Mass, *shows his God to human eyes / Beneath the veil of bread and wine*. In other words, as Pearce rightly sees, for Wilde, "the Blessed Sacrament is a mask that shows God to the people. It is a veil that reveals." No wonder Wilde ends the poem by calling upon the name *Of Him who now doth hide His face*, for even God wears a mask.

Wilde is also famous for his disdain for socialism, partly no doubt for selfish reasons, just as he knew he avoided becoming a Catholic for selfish reasons. ("What is to become of an indolent hedonist like myself if Socialism and the Church join forces against me?" he asked. "I want to stand apart and look

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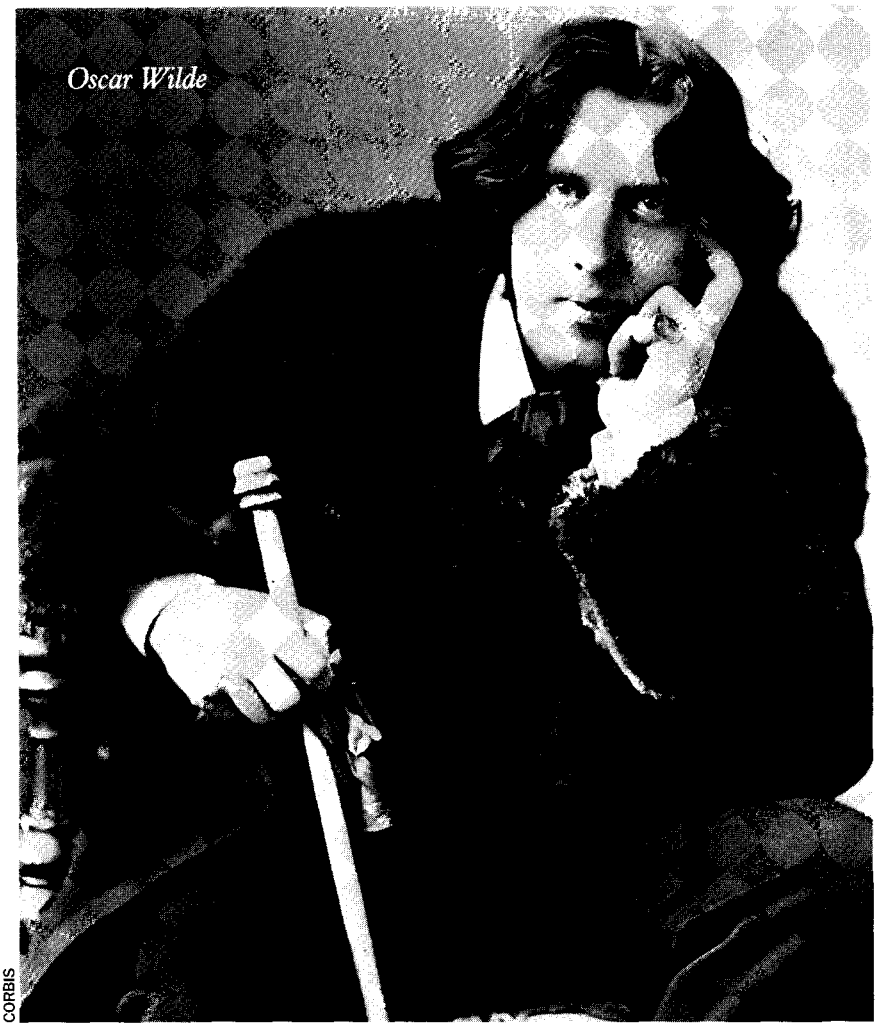
Oscar Wilde

CORBIS

on, being neither for God nor for his enemies.") But the selfishness had a different motive in the two cases. The Catholic Church genuinely fascinated Wilde from adolescence on, but socialism entirely repelled him, precisely because it was so direct and unmasked.

Nihilism had the same effect. His first play was called *Vera, or The Nihilists*, and on that topic he could be withering: He defined the nihilist as "that strange martyr who has no faith, who goes to the stake without enthusiasm, and dies for what he does not believe in." The nihilist believes in nothing except nothingness, precisely because he wears no mask. He stands for nothing because he represents nothing: No one can re-present something to the world without having a mask to do the presenting.

The pervasive flatness of the modern world, with its pointless and meaningless ideologies, may also have been the reason Wilde could never take the Church of England seriously. As he pointed out, with his usual whimsy, the Anglican Church is a peculiar *via media* between flat accommodation and easily transparent masks: "In the English Church a man succeeds, not through his capacity for belief, but through his capacity for disbelief. Ours is the only Church where the sceptic stands at the altar, and where [doubting] St. Thomas is regarded as the ideal apostle."

While clearly a Catholic by conviction from adolescence on (this Pearce makes abundantly clear), Wilde could never really join the Church, even after two years spent in hard labor in prison, because the masks he wore had taken on a life of their own, with the pose finally replacing the man, at least until the last few hours before his death: He "had enshrined the *double entendre* at the very core of his psyche. His higher self, emerging triumphant in his art, still clung, almost unwillingly, to the religious sensibility that had accompanied him throughout his life. His lower self, pouring forth epigrams at the dinner table or in his criticism, sought licentious liberation from the moral constraints that his higher self, the voice of conscience, sought to impose."

Part of the brilliance of Pearce's biography comes from the way he demonstrates Wilde's essentially religious and moral self by an acute analysis of the man's art (his literary criticism is another matter, where poses ruled), for "it is one of the paradoxes of Wilde's life and art that the true Wilde is to be gleaned from what he says in his art far more than from what he says, or is alleged to have said, in his life."

And of no other work is that more true than of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, which Pearce makes bold to claim is Wilde's most moral work, despite the near universal suspicions of its "immorality" from reviewers of that time. When Dorian's mentor, Lord Henry Wotton, proclaims that art has a soul but man does not, Dorian disagrees. "The soul is a terrible reality," he counters. "It can be bought, and sold, and bargained away. It can be poisoned, or made perfect. There is a soul in each one of us. I know it."

Pearce makes clear that Wilde came close to plumbing the mysteries of his own soul while he was in prison, and he was fond of quoting Dante: "Sorrow remarries us to God." But after reverting to his old vices after leaving prison (much to the disgust of his long-suffering and much-abused wife), he was baptized a Catholic and received absolution and extreme unction a few hours before his death.

As his wife so shrewdly wrote to a friend at the time, Wilde's reversion to his old ways showed that "punishment had not done him much good, since it has not taught him the lesson he most needed, namely that he is not the only person in the world." But prison at least taught him something. As he said in *De Profundis*, "Behind Joy and Laughter there may be a temperament, coarse, hard and callous. But behind Sorrow there is always Sorrow: Pain, unlike Pleasure, wears no mask." ♦

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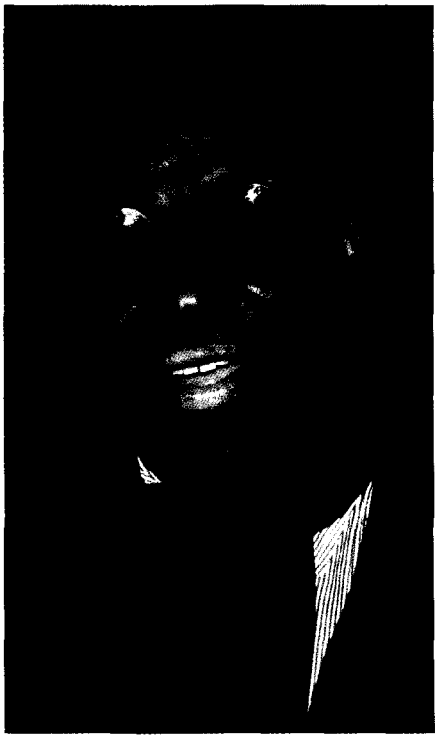
Artificial Culture

Stanley Crouch's grouchy take on the American scene. **BY HARRY SIEGEL**

It's easy to dismiss Stanley Crouch, and he's got only himself to blame. Once upon a time, Crouch was a young lion, the anointed heir to Ralph Ellison and Albert Murray and a brilliant columnist for the *Village Voice*. More recently, along with Wynton Marsalis, he's been a key force behind the controversially conservative series of jazz programs at Lincoln Center.

But his column in the *Daily News*, which too often reads as though it has been hastily dictated, his rather unfairly panned novel called *Don't the Moon Look Lonesome*, and his propensity for literally slapping down other thinkers, most recently Dale Peck, have all tarred his reputation. Coasting along as a minor celebrity and professional crank, Crouch has made himself easy to ignore, which is a shame, because when he bothers he's amongst our finest critics.

All these Crouches—the iconoclast and the blowhard, the visionary and the hack—are on display in *The Artificial White Man*, a series of essays on books and films loosely grouped around the idea of cultural miscegenation as the catalyst of the American experiment. "Integration," argues Crouch, "may be the most important theme in literature. That is all writers have ever talked about: how two things quite different or quite seemingly different can be brought together."



Zuma Press

The Artificial White Man
Essays on Authenticity
by Stanley Crouch
Basic, 244 pp., $24

But in place of the more complex question of how people and cultures engage one another, Crouch argues, a post-Watergate era of close examination has eroded our traditional institutions, and our popular culture now "defines authenticity from the bottom up," embracing "the neo-Sambo" motif of hip-hop videos that reduce blacks to the manic-depressive ravings of the unhinged adolescent, a token counter to bourgeois, "white" values.

Crouch rips into those in whose work "Hemingway's dictum of writing about what you know has become an excuse for avoiding risks." The title essay takes on David Shields's *Black Planet*, a truly depressing and well-received paean to the noble savages of the NBA, especially Gary Payton. Shields's "plantation of dreams" is fantastically sterile—he fantasizes about taking his wife as a black man would, is pleased to suggest that his daughter raises "more hell than usual when she's wearing her Sonics outfit," and so on. But where Irving Howe argued in *World of Our Fathers* that Jewish vulgarity helped strip away the pretensions of suburban life, Shields sees blacks as nothing more than the reductive fantasy of the ghetto fabulous, a vicarious antidote to his own empty whiteness. Shields's Jewishness, which he glosses over as merely a sort of whiteness, is entirely hollowed out, and he attempts to fill that void with his vapid negrophilia.

This, then, is the artificial white man, without cultural, ethnic, or religious values of his own, eager instead to celebrate and subsist on an imagined primitive and vital "life-force." When Shields expresses disappointment after Dennis Rodman fails to make a freak of himself in a particular game, Crouch asks, "Is anarchic behavior the best response to the weight that civilization imposes on us all? Is this the most we have to offer? Don't ask Shields."

In this essay, and in his nuanced appreciations of Saul Bellow and Philip Roth, Crouch is at his finest. But too often he comes unhinged, sounding weirdly like the thuggish rappers he lambastes, as when he accuses unnamed critics of, among other things, "punking out," "hiding under the bed," and "walking beneath a flag of white underwear stained fully yellow by liquefied fear"—and that's all in one sentence.

In his acknowledgments, Crouch thanks Chrisona Schmidt, "perhaps the Western world's fastest copy editor," which might not be the praise it seems given the volume's numerous typos, from "Juan Luis Borges" in the first paragraph to the disruptive repetition of paragraphs in Crouch's seventy-two-page ode to Quentin Tarantino, which is by far the volume's lengthiest and windiest essay.

Harry Siegel is editor in chief of New Partisan.com.

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Such quibbles aside, though, Crouch's concern with cultural exchange is such that he finds in Tarantino's junk culture mix of cheerfully sadistic violence, movie and popular references, gutter language, and interracial relations a genius that is certainly not there.

As he has it in his twice-repeated coda, ours is "a popular culture that defines itself by borrowing, extending, appropriating, and defiling. Above all, no one understands better than [Tarantino] the many miscegenations that make our modern world the unprecedented things that it is." This is a fine observation about the nature of our modern times, but it takes Crouch away from the other axis of the book, that "with the fall of the high, the energy from below has been elevated in our reimaginings of traditions. A purity has been projected onto the bottom." Fellow iconoclast Armond White is more astute on Tarantino's culpability on this second point when he says, plainly, that "QT made sadism hip and sent it 'round the world."

Although Crouch's observations at times miss the mark, his broad argument is both vital and serious. Earlier in the book, he points out the obvious and unspoken—that our literature has become so bloodless that television has far more to say about the meat of America. No matter how easy Crouch makes it to dismiss him, it's far more difficult to dismiss his ideas. ♦

Furst Among Equals

The spy novels of Alan Furst.

BY JONATHAN FOREMAN

Enthusiasts for the work of Alan Furst have compared reading his books to watching *Casablanca* for the first time. There is certainly a glamorous, nostalgic quality to his evocations of wartime Paris and Tangier. Moreover, his heroes are reminiscent of the grown-up, masculine heroes of 1940s cinema. But the romantic wistfulness of his novels coexists with a remarkable unsentimentality about politics and political conflict that is unlike anything out of Hollywood.

Dark Voyage
by Alan Furst
Random House, 272 pp., $24.95

You can see it in the quotation from Trotsky he uses to open 1988's *Night Soldiers* (possibly his best novel): "You may not be interested in war, but the war is interested in you." It's a notion as apposite to our time as to the period and place that is Furst's brilliant obsession: Europe between 1933 and 1944.

The protagonists of Furst's superb historical spy novels are, more often than not, diffident, urbane, worldly men, who would prefer not to take sides or get involved in the dirty work of espionage, but who eventually come to take a risky, complicated, and not always successful stand against evil.

And though Furst's fictional but marvelously authentic world is darker than ours—trapped between the Nazis and the Soviets, and on the brink of destruction by global war—his depiction of it expresses a sophisticated but honest moral intelligence of which America could use more. It's a moral intelligence that is in many ways more serious and more honest than those of John Le Carré or Graham Greene, to whom Furst has justly been compared.

For one thing, Furst is starkly aware

Jonathan Foreman is a New York-based writer and critic. He covered the invasion of Iraq for the New York Post.

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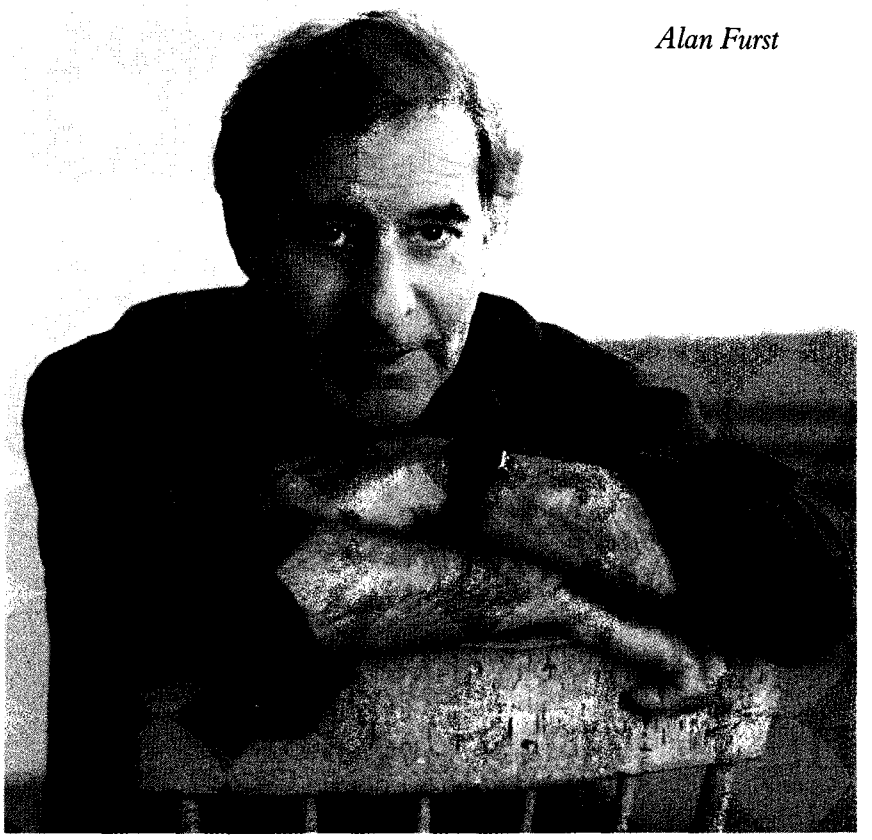

Alan Furst

of the horrors of Stalinism while understanding both the appeal of communism and the compromises necessary for the defeat of the Nazis. But it was his tragic sense of history that made his first three espionage novels, beginning with the magisterial *Night Soldiers* (about a Bulgarian youth recruited by the NKVD after his brother is kicked to death by local fascists in 1934) so compelling.

Those early books, which contained fascinating details of espionage tradecraft, were built on violent action described with deft economy, lyrical descriptions of place, and astonishingly authentic-seeming evocations of Western and Eastern European worlds that have long since vanished, worlds in which Jews, aristocrats, and forgotten ethnic minorities played a vital role. Though an American, Furst understands the complexity of that vanished Eastern Europe—with its acutely important social, linguistic, and cultural distinctions. Whether describing Paris under occupation or life in a Danubian village, Furst at his best displays an almost Tolstoyan grasp of social texture.

Dark Voyage, his latest, features less espionage technique than most of its predecessors. And the action, for the most part, takes place in a new region for Furst: the colonial ports of the Southern and Western Mediterranean. But though some readers might miss Furst's recreated Balkans and sometimes too-romanticized Paris, *Dark Voyage* marks a delightful return to form, especially in the width of its canvas and the understated excitement of its action scenes. Really a maritime tale rather than a spy novel, *Dark Voyage* turns out to be much more satisfying than his last three books: *Blood of Victory* and the Paris-set pair *The World at Night* and *Red Gold*, all three of which suffered from thin, fading storylines.

Furst's heroes are usually cosmopolitans—decent, single, highly sexed multilingual men in their late thirties or early forties, whose travels and languages, background and professions, make them citizens of Europe at a time when such a concept was barely imaginable, and when the differences between Europe's nationalities were much greater than most people today can even imagine.

Eric DeHaan, the hero of *Dark Voyage*, is a Dutch freighter captain whose career has taken him all around Europe and the Middle East. And like so many of Furst's romantic-pragmatist heroes, he could have been played by Humphrey Bogart.

Soon after the book opens in Tangier in April 1941—described at dusk with typical economy and aplomb as "a white city, and steep; alleys, souks and cafes, their patrons gathering for love and business, as the light faded way"—DeHaan is recruited to take his vessel on intelligence and sabotage missions for the British Royal Navy.

His ship, the *Noordeendam* (the latest of several rusty tramp steamers to play an important role in Furst's books), is given the identity of the *Santa Rosa*, which, flying the flag of neutral Spain, is sent around the Mediterranean. Vichy French patrol boats, Italian planes, and German submarines, all of these it must avoid, before being sent on an even more perilous voyage into the Baltic.

Like his crew and so many of the characters he encounters in his new work, DeHaan is a kind of refugee, who shares "a certain quiet anger common to those who cannot go home." Though an amateur of espionage and naval warfare, he has been made observant by life experience, and therefore a fine if sometimes puzzled guide to his world and its harsh necessities. He notices things others would not, whether it's the surprising ruthlessness of British intelligence or the scents of a Tangier backstreet, as in this Furstian passage: "As DeHaan climbed the stone stairway to the street, a desert wind, smelling of ancient dust, blew in his face. Eight months earlier, on a street in Liverpool, he'd discovered the same smell, had puzzled over it until he realized that it rose from the foundations of old buildings, newly excavated and blown into the air by Luftwaffe bombs." ♦

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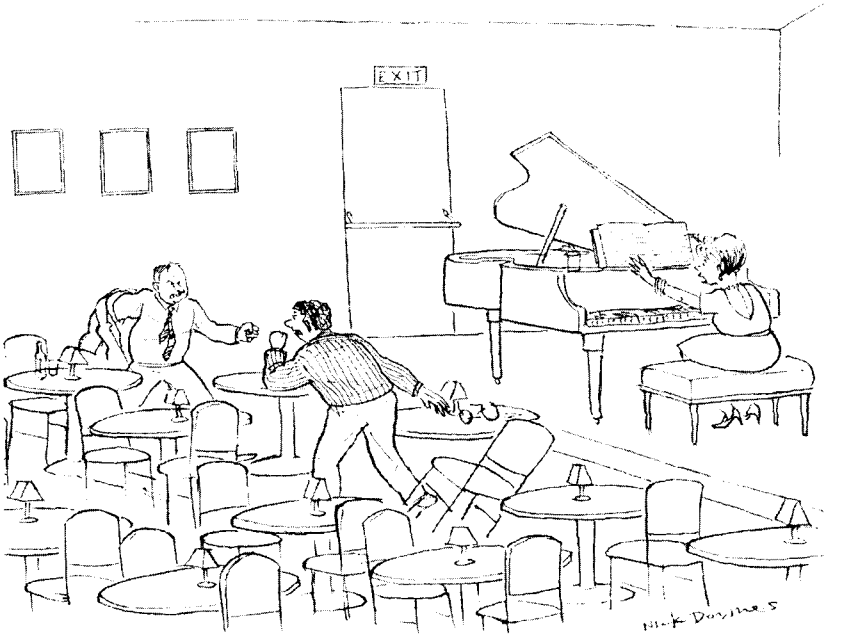

"Okay, okay—this one goes out to both *of you."*

Books in Brief

***A Year at the Supreme Court* edited by Neal Devins and Davison M. Douglas (Duke University Press, 243 pp., $21.95).** A collection of ten essays examining different aspects of the Supreme Court's 2002-03 term, a year which the editors characterize as a "watershed." Several of the essays are interesting, but the book as a whole suffers from a lack of context. A central theme is the role played by "swing" justices Anthony Kennedy and Sandra Day O'Connor, Reagan appointees whose votes with the court's left-of-center bloc have given the liberals a majority on social issues. Kennedy and O'Connor have been criticized for a lack of legal principle and inconsistency, and accused by some of tacking to the left to earn accolades and acceptance from the liberal legal academy and elite opinion. For the most part, the authors reject this criticism. But none of the authors explores the fact that both of the swing justices voted with the majority in *Bush* v. *Gore*, which earns only a passing mention in the book.

The book contains an uncompromising piece by the *National Journal*'s Stuart Taylor, which condemns the court's opinions in *Grutter* v. *Bollinger* and *Gratz* v. *Bollinger*—decisions that upheld the University of Michigan's race-conscious admissions policy for the university's law school while striking down preferential treatment for applicants to its undergraduate program. Most commentators have characterized these decisions (to quote Tony Mauro's essay in the book) as upholding the law school's more flexible program "while striking down the more rigidly race-conscious undergraduate program."

Taylor, however, argues trenchantly that the critical difference between the law school and the undergraduate program is that the latter policy was transparent and honest, while the program approved by the court was inscrutable. Taylor points out that the advantages given by the law school to minority applicants were no less rigid and were even more substantial than those provided by the undergraduate program. Taylor also argues that, by endorsing such stealth racial preferences, the Court saved affirmative action, since race-conscious policies are opposed by the "vast majority" of Americans, and these programs are therefore politically unsustainable unless their mechanics are shrouded in confusion.

Taylor's take on the court's counter-majoritarianism makes an interesting contrast with the piece by Jeffrey Rosen, who criticizes the court's decision in *Lawrence* v. *Texas* striking down an anti-sodomy law as a violation of an individual's right to privacy and liberty. Rosen is critical of the rationale of this opinion for the same reason that he has been critical of *Roe* v. *Wade*, as both represent the Supreme Court getting out ahead of public opinion on a divisive social issue. According to Rosen, the court should only "thwart the will of the majority when the principled constitutional arguments for doing so are overwhelmingly clear and convincing."

A Year at the Supreme Court raises some thought-provoking questions about some of the court's decisions during the 2002-03 term, but the book's premise that there was something uniquely important in that "watershed" year is shaky. Although 2002-03 saw decisions on a number of controversial social issues, it is difficult to conclude that that term was more momentous, legally, politically, or institutionally, for Supreme Court jurisprudence than other recent terms. After all, 2000-01 saw *Bush* v. *Gore*, while last year's cases included the terrorism cases as well as *Blakely* v. *Washington*, which, in striking down a determinate sentencing regime, has thrown the criminal justice system into disarray.

—Aitan Goelman

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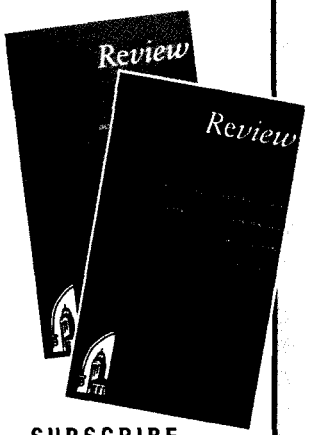

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—Tod Lindberg

The Persistence of North Korea

What has been keeping Pyongyang afloat?

My own work on the North Korean economy has generally been associated with what others have termed the "collapsist" school of thought, and not unfairly. As far back as June 1990, I published an op-ed essay titled "The Coming Collapse of North Korea"; since then, my analyses have recurrently questioned the viability of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's (DPRK's) economy and system.

It is perhaps especially fitting, then, that having imagined the odds of the DPRK's post-Soviet survival to be very low, I should be charged with explaining just how the North Korean system has managed to survive these past 13 or 14 years—and to speculate about the possibility of sustainable pathways that might permit regime, state, and system to endure into the future.

—Nicholas Eberstadt

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

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